

# THE FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

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NGO Reporting on the  
General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security



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# The First Committee Monitor

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RCW provides services to activists, diplomats, UN staffers, academics, and others, including:

- Posting statements, draft resolutions, and First Committee information online at [www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org);
- Coordinating an array of briefings, workshops and panels designed to educate diplomats and activists on issues of disarmament, peace, and security;
- Serving as an information resource by email or phone; and
- Providing a link between the First Committee and NGOs who are not in New York.



## Introduction

Over the last few years, the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security has taken place after disappointing outcomes at the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, the World Summit, the Disarmament Commission, and the Small Arms and Light Weapons Review Conference. This year, the situation is not quite so bleak. While the CD closed its 2007 session without agreement on a programme of work, it inched closer than ever to a compromise, with nearly universal agreement on the package deal proposed by the Conference Presidents. In September, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Entry Into Force Conference reaffirmed the commitment of the States Parties to upholding and promoting the Treaty through eleven practical measures outlined in the Final Declaration. The first Preparatory Committee of the 2010 NPT review cycle, after days of procedural wrangling, allowed for interactive exchange between delegations—as the Cuban delegation pointed out this week, “amidst the current impasse and backward steps in the area of disarmament, many believe that having had the opportunity to talk is, per se, a success.”

After the first week of General Debate, most delegations appear optimistic about the possibilities before them. While buzz around the foremost issue in the CD, the Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty, is largely quiet and cautious, there are some other interesting developments on the horizon. The delegations from Chile, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sweden, and Switzerland intend to table a draft resolution calling on the nuclear weapon states to remove their nuclear weapons from “launch on warning” status (de-alerting). This initiative can be seen as a step towards building a positive outcome to the 2010 NPT review cycle. Cuba, meanwhile, is working to garner support for a draft resolution on the effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium (DU), which has been another issue of great concern to civil society for years. (See RCW’s DU resources, including a report on the recent Fourth International Conference on DU Weapons.)

Outside of the First Committee, other initia-

tives such as the Oslo Process on cluster munitions, continuing work on the Arms Trade Treaty, and the ongoing campaign to establish a fourth special session on disarmament at the UN, have been receiving strong support from governments, diplomats, and civil society.

However, these initiatives are taking place against a rather stormy backdrop. Military spending has reached astronomical heights, with global expenditures over US\$1 trillion per year and the military-industrial complex profiting from mass destruction more than ever before. Meanwhile, Millennium Development Goals are far from being met, and most donor countries (high income states) have not met their 0.7% development assistance pledge. Violent armed conflicts continue to be waged throughout the world, nuclear weapon modernization programmes proceed despite disarmament obligations, aggressive military posturing has increased geopolitical tensions, and insecurity, for the entire international community, is arguably at an all-time high.

In particular, the US-India Deal, which Pakistan suggested was the basis for its opposition to the proposed programme of work in the CD, represents a step backwards for non-proliferation and disarmament. It allows for India to increase its nuclear weapons, fissile materials, and delivery systems, and does not restrict India from resuming nuclear testing. By giving India access to the benefits of the NPT membership without making it sign the Treaty or adhere to its tenets, the deal undermines the NPT at a time when the regime is facing other crises and needs support to retain its credibility and functionality. (See RCW’s fact sheet on the US-India Deal.) Meanwhile, tensions with Iran over its nuclear programme continue to grow: despite the work plan finalized between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran in August to resolve all outstanding issues related to Iran’s past nuclear activities, the United States and France have been pushing for a third Security Council sanctions resolution in response to Iran’s continued uranium enrichment programme. (See the Nuclear Proliferation report.)

However, one year after the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) conducted its first nuclear weapon test, the govern-

### Nuclear Disarmament

While bemoaning the lack of progress in multilateral disarmament—nuclear and otherwise—many delegates in the General Debate of the First Committee nonetheless found reasons to be more optimistic? about the future of nuclear disarmament. South Korean Ambassador Kim Hyun Chong told the Committee, “For too long, the multilateral disarmament agenda has been in disarray, with no substantive progress in the major non-proliferation and disarmament negotiations ... This must be changed. The international community has an urgent responsibility to reverse the failures and shortcomings of the multilateral disarmament community.”

In a reference to the decisions by some nuclear weapon states to go forward with new generations of weapons, Ambassador Glaudine Mtshali of South Africa said she was “disappointed that nuclear weapon states have not used the opportunity presented by the renewal of weapons systems to give effect to their disarmament obligations.” Indonesia’s delegation complained about “the lack of leadership on the part of the nuclear weapon states” in eliminating nuclear weapons.

Speaking on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), Ambassador Luis De Alba of Mexico said that despite continuing reliance on nuclear weapons in military doctrines, the NAC “nevertheless sees some modest signs that might positively evolve to create the conditions for the adoption of specific measures leading to the elimination of the threat of nuclear weapons and to strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.” Those measures included the improved climate at the first session of the NPT preparatory committee this spring. He added that success in 2010 had to be built on “full respect for and implementation of” all of the commitments made at the 1995 and 2000 review conferences, including the “unequivocal undertaking” by the nuclear weapon states to eliminate their arsenals and the resolution on the Middle East.

De Alba said the NAC would submit a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament issues this year. Japan’s delegation said it would submit its annual draft resolution “that maps out concrete measures towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.” No specifics were offered on either.

Other non-nuclear weapon states presented their priorities that they wanted to see the nuclear weapon states pursue, from items as immediate as a follow-on treaty between the United States and Russia on strategic arms to the more ambitious call for negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention. The African Group said the international community “should agree on the commencement without further delay of multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of [a nuclear weapons convention]. In order to realize the objective, the Group calls on nuclear weapon states to commit themselves to stopping the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems.”

Norway’s Ambassador Aas said, “We must not abandon a comprehensive nuclear disarmament agenda. My government welcomes ongoing reductions in nuclear arsenals. We hope and expect that the START treaty will be strengthened following its expiration in 2009, and the same should be said for the SORT treaty due to expire in 2012.”

For their part, the United States and Russia argued they were making significant strides in fulfilling their disarmament obligations, including a replacement for START. Ambassador A.I. Antonov of Russia said the two countries were “maintaining a dialogue ... on a new arrangement to replace this treaty. US Ambassador Christina Rocca said Washington “has been fully engaged with our Russian partners in devising a post-START framework for over a year.” Rocca added, “We are hopeful that we will be able to carry forward those concepts from the treaty that may still be useful, while developing new concepts more in tune with our new strategic relationship.” They also agreed that they had made deep cuts in the nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War. There were few other issues on which the two delegations agreed.

“Today we acknowledge that disarmament is at crisis,” Antonov said, “The stability of its international legal basis is threatened. We have to state that some treaties are not functioning properly, others are eroding and decaying—treaty vacuum is about to come to the area of



## Nuclear Proliferation

The nuclear programmes in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Iran once again dominated discussion on nuclear proliferation in the General Debate of the UN General Assembly First Committee (see separate report on the DPRK's nuclear programme). Contrary to exhortations of unity of the international community on the issue of Iran's nuclear programme, the discussion in the General Debate revealed a high degree of divergence. On the broader issue of proliferation, most delegations reaffirmed their support for existing non-proliferation initiatives and repeated well-worn concerns and disagreements regarding a balanced implementation of priorities. Overall, delegations presented no new ideas, likely foreshadowing a continuation of the haphazard and selective approach to these issues, as warned of by such individuals as former Secretary-General Kofi Annan and former International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Hans Blix, and the pursuit of solutions based solely on national objectives.

### Iran

Divergences were readily apparent in the approach of the P5 on the issue of Iran, despite the 28 September P5+2 statement in which the major powers agreed to seek a third sanctions resolution in the UN Security Council unless reports from the IAEA and the EU High Representative show progress in November. The United States again adopted the hardest line against Iran and called outright for the UN Security Council to "move forward as soon as possible to adopt a third resolution under Chapter VII imposing additional sanctions measures."

Although the EU's delegation called upon Iran to "respond positively and swiftly to the demands of the international community ... in particular by suspending its enrichment related and reprocessing activities," and endorsed the 28 September P5+2 statement, it more positively expressed hope "that the discussions between the IAEA and Iran on outstanding issues will, at least by November, meet the targets laid down by the 'work plan'." The EU made no reference to an additional sanctions resolution,

however, it expressed "resolve not to allow Iran to acquire military nuclear capabilities and to see to all consequences of its nuclear programme, in terms of proliferation, resolved," without further specification as to what such "resolution" might entail.

The Russian Federation and China's delegations both placed emphasis on diplomatic and political solutions to addressing the Iran nuclear situation, without reference to the imposition of additional sanctions or the 28 September P5+2 statement, perhaps an indication of lukewarm support for continued escalation of the situation. Russia's Ambassador Antonov called for a "comprehensive approach ... to the situation around the Iranian nuclear program." He further called for a "comprehensive political and diplomatic solution" and "for intensifying contacts between the Six Parties and Iran in order to elaborate the models that would allow to launch such purpose-oriented full-scale negotiations process." China's Ambassador Cheng Jingye implored all parties to "show flexibility, exercise patience and stick to the course of peaceful resolution in seeking a comprehensive, long-term and appropriate solution" to the Iran situation.

Other Western delegations that spoke out on Iran tended to take an approach closer to that of the EU. Canada and New Zealand emphasized a need for Iran to comply fully with UN Security Council resolutions 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007), a reference to Iran's refusal to suspend its uranium enrichment programme. Delegations affiliated with the Non-Aligned Movement, of which Iran is a member, universally adopted a softer tone, welcoming the agreement between Iran and the IAEA to resolve outstanding issues. Additionally, without direct reference to Iran, Non-Aligned delegates generally called for balanced and comprehensive pursuit of non-proliferation objectives and reaffirmed the right expressed in Article IV of the NPT to peaceful development and use of nuclear energy. Ambassador Aziz of Egypt observed the international community was witnessing "efforts aimed at preventing the non-nuclear-weapon-states from their inalienable right in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology." Indonesia's Ambassador

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### Nuclear Energy and the Fuel Cycle

Amid the ongoing dispute over Iran's nuclear programme and anticipation of a global renaissance in nuclear energy, the issue of the nuclear fuel cycle featured prominently in the General Debate of the First Committee. Discussion regarding attempts to rein in the spread of the nuclear fuel cycle due to proliferation concerns was met with equal concern over the uneven implementation of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the erosion of rights of member states, pitting the concerns of the industrialized North against the "needs" of the developing South.

The range of disagreement on the issue underscores its complexity and the difficulty states will face in managing the risks inherent in the global spread of nuclear power and proliferation-sensitive nuclear technologies. As a new complication in the already troubled waters of the debate over the future of the nuclear fuel cycle, the US-India deal was cited by several key delegations as a negative development. In attempts to deal with these issues, the First Committee heard both familiar calls for strengthening existing non-proliferation initiatives and announcement of a new one, namely a joint Russian/Kazakh facility to enrich uranium to fuel nuclear reactors.

Worry over the implications for proliferation and international security came primarily from developed states with advanced nuclear programmes and infrastructures. Responding to concerns stemming from additional states acquiring nuclear fuel cycle capabilities, and with it the capability to produce fissile materials usable in nuclear weapons, Ambassador Aas of Norway cautioned, "We must ensure that an expansion of nuclear energy is not at the expense of the non-proliferation regime and international peace and security." US Ambassador Rocca quoted Mohammed ElBaradei as saying the spread of sensitive nuclear technology is the "Achilles Heel" of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Reaction from the delegations of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and developing states revealed tension over approaches taken by developed states on the nuclear fuel cycle, amplified by negative implications for the NPT inherent in the US-India deal. Ambassador Aziz of Egypt

obliquely criticized some states for their "efforts aimed at preventing the non-nuclear-weapon-States from their inalienable right in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology." In addition to affirming the right of states to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, Indonesian Ambassador Natalegawa, on behalf of NAM, emphasized "the responsibility of developed countries [is] to support the legitimate requirement of developing countries for nuclear energy."

Referring to the US-India deal and its conflict with the core bargain of the NPT, Ambassador Aziz asked rhetorically, "How can that be given that such inalienable right represents the return for which non-nuclear-weapon-States have accepted to permanently give-up the military nuclear option?" Also in reference to the deal and worries that the rights of NPT member states are being steadily eroded in the name of non-proliferation, Ambassador Asmady of Indonesia pointed out:

It would be more logical if nuclear cooperation could be rewarded exclusively to parties to the treaty. Any cooperation with non-state parties does not only undermine the NPT regime but also provides less incentive for those state parties willing to comply fully with the provisions of the treaty, particularly where those faithful parties are faced with incremental obstacles to pursuing peaceful uses of nuclear energy by the unilateral imposition of strict restriction on export of nuclear materials.

Avoiding the debate over the future of the nuclear fuel cycle, Ambassador Mtshali of South Africa called for strengthening regulatory approaches and safety regulations on the spread of nuclear energy. Although Ambassador Mtshali declined to state her country's position on the matter, South Africa occupies a important position as a country that has expressed interest in enriching uranium domestically, and has rejected participation in the US Global Nuclear Energy Partnership programme.

Despite lack of agreement among key states, several initiatives focused on the nuclear fuel cycle continue to move forward. The delegations of

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## International Court of Justice

In 1996, the International Court of Justice (ICJ), sometimes referred to as the World Court, rendered an advisory opinion in which it affirmed the general illegality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons and the universal obligation to achieve complete nuclear disarmament. Every year since then, the Malaysian delegation has introduced a draft resolution in the First Committee on follow-up to the ICJ advisory opinion calling for the implementation of the disarmament obligation through the commencement of multilateral negotiations that would culminate in a Nuclear Weapons Convention – an international treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons and providing for their verified elimination. On 8 October, Malaysia announced that it would again be introducing such a resolution to this UN General Assembly.

Despite strong support for the resolution, including from several states possessing nuclear weapons, there appears to have been minimal efforts by the nuclear weapon states (NWS) to take steps on its implementation. Multilateral negotiations on steps towards nuclear abolition have been blocked in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) – as has the proposal to merely commence deliberations on nuclear disarmament as part of the CD draft program for work (the A5 proposal). In addition, the NWS maintain robust policies for the threat or use of nuclear weapons, as well as programs for the upkeep, replacement, and even modernization of weapons into the indefinite future.

On the other hand, the NWS—particularly the United States, United Kingdom, and France—have claimed at nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Conferences and Preparatory Committee meetings that they have been implementing their disarmament obligations through such actions as halting nuclear testing and reducing stockpiles.

In order to place additional attention on the legal obligation to pursue and achieve complete nuclear disarmament, Indonesia told the First Committee on 10 October: “[W]e will not relent in urging [the nuclear weapons states] to continue to take the necessary steps to achieve further progress on nuclear disarmament in a verifiable and irreversible manner, including perhaps by requesting the ICJ to render its advisory opinion

on the nuclear disarmament obligation of all states.”

This idea of returning to the ICJ was floated by the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA) in 2005 and was the subject of informal consultations and workshops during the 2006 UN General Assembly and the 2007 NPT Prep Com. In *Return to the International Court of Justice: A Strategy to Break the Stalemate* ([www.lcnp.org/wcourt/memoreturnICJhead.pdf](http://www.lcnp.org/wcourt/memoreturnICJhead.pdf)), Dr. John Burroughs explains that a follow-up case in the ICJ would allow the Court to clarify what good faith negotiation of nuclear disarmament requires of governments. Dr. Burroughs also notes that the ICJ would most likely a) indicate that states possessing nuclear weapons have not been adequately fulfilling the obligation; b) assess whether specific policies and practices, for example modernization of arsenals and expansion of options for use of nuclear weapons, are consistent with the 2000 NPT commitments to a diminishing role of nuclear weapons in security policies and the disarmament obligation, against the background of the Court’s 1996 finding of general illegality of threat or use; and c) confirm that the disarmament obligation applies to all states, including those outside the NPT - Israel, India, and Pakistan. In addition, returning to the ICJ would demonstrate that “the 1996 opinion is not an anomaly, to be discarded in the dustbin of history, but rather a living reality.” It would also provide a possibility to highlight, in the press and public conscience, the issue of nuclear weapons and the legal responsibilities of the NWS, and thus help revitalize the global nuclear abolition movement.

An indication of the significance of such a return case was given on 2 October when Christopher Weeramantry, President of IALANA and former Vice-President of the ICJ, was awarded the 2007 Right Livelihood Award, with specific mention being made by the Right Livelihood Award Foundation to Judge Weeramantry’s leadership in this initiative to take a follow-up case in the ICJ.

There are some concerns in the proposal to return to the ICJ. One is that a new opinion could undermine the strong statement of the

### Disarmament Machinery

The rusty machinery of disarmament is long overdue for some maintenance—and in some instances, to simply be put to use. With a generally redundant First Committee, stale UN Disarmament Commission, deadlocked Conference on Disarmament, and slow start to the 2010 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review cycle, the situation looks a little grim.

Several delegations pointed to the politicization of technical and legal issues and double-standards that are undermining the disarmament and non-proliferation regime's legitimacy and capacity. Concern for the international community's adherence to and respect for what Egypt's Ambassador Aziz called "traditional reference marks represented by international instruments, United Nations resolutions and decisions of relevant international fora" was frequently voiced by delegations. Ambassador Mtshali of South Africa referenced the "emergence of a multitude of unilateral and plurilateral initiatives . . . [that] not only reflect the lack of agreement and divergent views on the challenges that we face, but are also indicative of a disregard for the value of the multilateral system." Widespread agreement was expressed in opening statements that multilateralism is the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues.

Most delegates welcomed the restructuring of the Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA) into the Office of Disarmament Affairs (ODA). After a successful civil society campaign opposing UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's attempt subsume the DDA into the Department of Political Affairs, he revised his proposal to the General Assembly in March. The General Assembly subsequently passed Resolution 61/257 supporting the establishment of the ODA, which maintained the budgetary autonomy and existing structures and functions of the DDA. Many delegations also expressed support for the Secretary-General's pledge to make disarmament a priority during his term, and hope that the restructuring of the ODA will, as Turkey's Ambassador Ilkin said, help support the "revitalization of [the] international disarmament agenda through coordinated efforts in which the United Nations should play a more effective role."

Under-Secretary-General Sergio Duarte, who was appointed High Representative for Disarmament Affairs for the new ODA, was also welcomed by all delegations. In his opening remarks, Duarte emphasized, "We must ensure that our architecture rests on a solid foundation of multilateral cooperation and respect for treaty commitments." He reminded the Committee that since the first General Assembly in 1946, the goal of multilateralism has been advancing common interests to achieve the common good.

Many delegates reaffirmed the importance of the First Committee, though Colombia's Ambassador de Barberi expressed the need to "look for more effective results by rationalising time and resources available in the framework of new methodological approaches." Others emphasized the importance and relevance of the UN Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized deliberative body, which in 2007 focused discussions on recommendations for achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons—but concluded without substantive recommendations. The speaker for the Rio Group nevertheless highlighted the importance of keeping the "channels of dialogue" open.

Delegates also expressed optimism about the modest success experienced during the first nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, at which frustration from days of deadlock over the adoption of the agenda gave way to interactive dialogue during the second week, and at which a final report, including the Chairman's Factual Summary, was adopted. In addition, Ambassador Diaz of Cuba commended the "active and positive role played by the non-governmental organizations" at the PrepCom. As New Zealand's Ambassador Mackay stated, however, the NPT "requires a sense of renewed ownership and energy from all of its States Parties in support of its full implementation" in order for the international community to see true success during the NPT review cycle.

Most speakers also called on the member

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## Fissile Materials

This year, the long-awaited start of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear explosives (FMCT) never seemed closer. Yet, what is still commonly referred to as the next logical step in nuclear disarmament remains just out of reach. Although the efficacy of the FMCT as a true disarmament measure, much less an instrument that makes any impact at all on the behaviour of states it will purportedly “affect”, has yet to be established due to lack of consensus over its scope, the first step of states simply sitting down to negotiate has so far proven the hardest—and there have been no shortages of developments and issues that have either blocked progress or served as justifications for blocking progress.

At the end of its 2007 session, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) was near agreement on a package deal, L.1, which would have enabled it to begin negotiations on an FMCT in 2008 (see Disarmament Machinery). Although the United States “prefers a clear path to negotiation of an FMCT without reference to any other issue”, US Ambassador to the CD Christina Rocca explained her country had “made the conscious decision this year that it would not stand in the way of consensus on a P-6 proposal for a Programme of Work.”

Despite finally coming to grips with old linkages, such as those of prevention of an arms race in outer space, new ones have emerged. The effect of a ban on fissile material production on the delicate strategic situation in South Asia has proven to be incompatible with the US-India deal for nuclear cooperation, which has become the latest stumbling block used to justify the continued use of procedural tactics to block consensus.

Canadian Ambassador Marius Grinius stated his delegation “will work for a decision at the First Committee related to a Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty,” although it appears as if the Canadians are still engaged in consultations in order to determine if they can find consensus for such a step. Although any decision would have no direct bearing on the struggle to adopt a programme of work in the CD, such a step would signal an end to the impasse and could invigorate efforts to hit the ground running with negotiations if they are

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## Outer Space

Each year, the First Committee of the General Assembly adopts, by an overwhelming majority, the Sri Lanka-sponsored resolution on “Preventing an Arms Race in Outer Space” (PAROS). Despite this, as well as near consensus in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to begin discussions on space security, the international community has yet to negotiate a legally-binding treaty.

Progress, however, is being made. In addition to this year’s adoption of debris mitigating guidelines by the Committee on Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, several states have put forward proposals in various fora, a welcome step forward reflected in this week’s General Debate.

In the view of Venezuela’s delegation, states with superior technological capacity have a special responsibility to renounce the placement of weapons in outer space.<sup>1</sup> Towards this end, some delegations strongly support, as Mongolia does, the adoption of “a relevant legally-binding instrument,” one that would prevent the “threat or use of force against space objects.”

Delegations such as Canada, Switzerland, and Bangladesh expressed mild support for PAROS discussions in the CD, the forum that most states regard as the appropriate venue for any future negotiations. Turkey’s Ambassador Ilkin noted his general support for “views and proposals on strengthening the existing international legal framework directed at preventing an arms race in outer space”. China’s delegation, which had always been a leading voice for PAROS in the CD, was equally vague, plainly asserting that they are “firmly opposed to weaponization of outer space” and that they have “appeal[ed] to the international community to negotiate and conclude a new international legal instrument in this regard.” Such voices of general support could be interpreted as a positive sign, an openness to progress, and a hesitancy on the part of supportive states to rule out any specific, forward-looking proposal.

Kazakhstan voiced particular support for the Russian-sponsored “Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activi-

1. Unofficial translation. Errors are solely the responsibility of the author.

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*Introduction (cont.)*

ment has agreed to dismantle its nuclear weapons programme and has shut down and sealed its sole plutonium-producing reactor in Yongbyon under IAEA supervision. The success to date of the six-party talks demonstrates the potential and importance of multilateral diplomacy as the only legitimate, credible, and fair way to engage with contentious issues of disarmament and non-proliferation. It also exemplifies the effect that international diplomacy can have in overcoming the problems created by conflicting national security priorities, priorities which often undermine the collective human security that multilateral fora such as the First Committee strive to protect.

First Committee is often met by delegates and civil society alike with weariness or even apathy, as time-hardened positions have given rise to a number of static annual resolutions that are tabled and voted on year after year. However, the First Committee is the best place for states to build consensus on the issues, to reach common understandings, and to agree on norms of behaviour and principles of cooperation—respect for which we could all benefit from.

- Ray Acheson, Reaching Critical Will  
([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org))

*Nuclear Disarmament (cont.)*

strategic arms.” He also spoke of the “inherent interconnection between strategic offensive and defensive missile arrangement” and said the “unilateral plans” for missile defenses and space weaponization by the US “would adversely affect the disarmament process.”

Rocca touted the reductions the US is making in nuclear forces, saying that by 2012 the US stockpile will be “nearly one quarter of what it was at the end of the Cold War.” She dismissed as untrue charges leveled at the United States that Washington had abandoned the START process, has nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert, had not fulfilled its commitments under the 1990-91 Presidential Nuclear Initiatives and was increasing the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines.

- Jim Wurst, Middle Powers Initiative  
([www.middlepowers.org](http://www.middlepowers.org))

*Nuclear Proliferation (cont.)*

Asmady stated, “We believe that the international community should not be skeptical of the activities of certain states—which are parties—in building peaceful nuclear programs as long as they will not be diverted into military purposes.”

**Other non-proliferation initiatives**

Various delegations reaffirmed their support for a variety of other non-proliferation initiatives, particularly those aimed at preventing non-state acquisition of WMD or related materials, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and 1673 (2006), the Proliferation Security Initiative, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. The latter met in Kazakhstan in June and has expanded its membership to 60 states. The delegation of South Africa expressed skepticism about these approaches, describing non-inclusive, non-UN based initiatives as “coalitions of the willing,” referring to the ill-fated alliance of states that continues to be bogged down combating an extended insurgency in Iraq. Related to proliferation by state actors, the EU called for a strengthened role of the UN Security Council so that “it can take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance, inter alia, with NPT obligations,” an expansion of the Council’s historical mandate, which is limited to matters that affect international peace and security.

The efficacy of selective approaches to proliferation continued to be questioned amid calls for comprehensive approaches that are inclusive and address root causes of insecurity. Arab states in particular emphasized the growing imbalance in the pursuit of non-proliferation objectives. Ambassador Aziz charged some states with “attaching the priority for non-proliferation while ignoring nuclear disarmament.” Ambassador Al-Nasser of Qatar cautioned, “The selective use of rules of non-proliferation constitutes a driving force towards proliferation and the race to achieve a deterrence capability.”

- Michael Spies, Lawyers’ Committee on Nuclear Policy ([www.lcnpp.org](http://www.lcnpp.org))



## *Disarmament Machinery (cont.)*

states of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work, emphasizing their optimism that the progress made during the 2007 session should lead to agreement on the CD package deal L.1 at the start of the 2008 session. Unfortunately, progress in the CD depends on more than just time for governments to ponder their options—it depends on the satisfactory treatment of a number of “national security concerns”. Currently, the most crucial of these is the US-India Deal, the implications of which are great for South Asian relations in particular and questions of nuclear proliferation in general. Other security concerns, such as military tensions between the United States and China, the nuclear weapon states’ continued inclusion of nuclear weapons in their security doctrines, and the US’ imperious ballistic missile “defense” system and domination of outer space, also need to be addressed before the CD can move forward on its agenda in a balanced, comprehensive, and non-discriminatory way.

During last year’s thematic debate on disarmament machinery, Dr. Patricia Lewis of UNIDIR argued, “It is not political will that is lacking—it is agreement on direction that does not exist right now. In my view, the political will that does exist is pulling with equal force in opposite directions—a sure recipe for staying stuck in one place.” All delegations, except for the US, have agreed that one way to work towards agreement would be convening a fourth special session on disarmament (SSOD IV). Ambassador Aziz of Egypt indicated that SSOD IV could help with “restoring the lost confidence in the credibility of the nuclear disarmament regime,” as the first special session in 1978 did. The establishment of SSOD IV could offer the opportunity for decision makers and civil society to comprehensively address disarmament issues in contemporary contexts, and elevate public awareness of the challenges and relevance of disarmament and non-proliferation in all their cross-cutting, interlinking facets. Whether or not it would help motivate governments to action remains to be seen.

- Ray Acheson, Reaching Critical Will  
([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org))

## *Nuclear Energy (cont.)*

Russia and Kazakhstan announced their countries had established the International Centre for Uranium Enrichment in Angarsk, Russia. According to Russia’s Ambassador Antonov, the centre is intended to “provide states with the opportunity to have guaranteed access to the capacities for uranium enrichment to satisfy their needs in nuclear fuel without the need to have their own nuclear fuel cycle,” open to all states “without any political preconditions.” Ambassador Antonov also announced Russia and the United States had recently proposed merging existing initiatives, all toward the purpose of providing “reliable supply of nuclear fuel on the basis of international cooperation as an alternative to proliferation of sensitive technologies.” Rather than calling for new measures, Ambassador Mackay of New Zealand reiterated a standard call to strengthen existing measures by calling for implementation of safeguards and the Additional Protocol to be a condition of nuclear supply.

- Michael Spies, Lawyers’ Committee on Nuclear Policy ([www.lcnp.org](http://www.lcnp.org))

## *Fissile Materials (cont.)*

able to commence once the CD convenes again in January 2008.

Even once negotiations begin, the process toward achieving an effective FMCT may still be difficult to attain without political shifts in key capitals, as no consensus exists on a number of issues pertaining to the scope, definition, and verification of the treaty. It will be the answers to these questions, rather than whether or not the treaty should be negotiated in tandem with other matters, that will determine if the treaty “fulfills both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives” and possesses “a true nuclear disarmament character,” in the words of South Africa’s Ambassador Glaudine Mtshali.

- Michael Spies, Lawyers’ Committee on Nuclear Policy ([www.lcnp.org](http://www.lcnp.org))

### Verification and Transparency

The issues of verification and transparency are vitally important for international security: transparency allows states to monitor implementation of agreements, while verification provides technical assurances, and both help the international community build confidence in each other's respect for international law and compliance with treaty obligations. In previous years, delegations to the First Committee have agreed on the need for effective verification and compliance mechanisms, but there has been a lack of consensus on what constitutes compliance and verification, which treaties are effectively verifiable, or what are the most appropriate measures for confidence-building.

Last week, there was general agreement with the Portuguese Ambassador's statement on behalf of the European Union, which argued, "Verification mechanisms should be reinforced and new effective verification mechanisms should be created when and/or where necessary to ensure full compliance with the obligations contained in multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements."

Many delegations called for an increase in transparency on specific issues. For example, delegations from the European Union, Canada, Kazakhstan, and the Russian Federation called for transparency in outer space. Kazakhstan's Ambassador Aitimova argued, "Cooperation in ensuring transparency and building confidence in space activities is the major condition to prevent the real threat of an arms race in space. Kazakhstan supports the resolution entitled Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities."

Meanwhile, the Chinese delegation emphasized the importance of transparency of armaments, and of actively promoting mutual trust in the field of security among countries. China's Ambassador Cheng Jingye asserted, "the Chinese Government has decided to report annually, starting from this year, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations its military expenditures for the latest fiscal year, and resume providing the Secretary-General annually with the requested data for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms."

Delegations also expressed continued support for the importance of organizations like the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is responsible for verifying the non-military nature of non-nuclear weapon states' nuclear energy programmes. Many delegations emphasized that the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocols constitute the current verification standard. Norway's Ambassador Aas pointed out, "non-nuclear weapon states cannot and must not be mere observers or demandeurs ... [but] can make other important contributions, such as ratifying the IAEA Additional Protocol, in addressing regional security concern and in working with nuclear-weapon states to promote transparency, non-nuclear member states can facilitate progress toward nuclear disarmament."

Iraq's Ambassador also made reference to UNMOVIC, the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspections Commission, which verified destruction of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons and long-range missiles. In June 2007, the Security Council adopted resolution 1762 (2007) which, inter-alia, decided to terminate immediately the mandate of UNMOVIC under the relevant resolutions. Many non-governmental experts think the international verification system would have been better served if UNMOVIC had been re-mandated after its withdrawal from Iraq to continue acting as an official UN verification system, rather than allowing the expertise to disperse after its closure.

Statements about a verification mechanism for a Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) were few, but when mentioned, delegations were firm about its importance. For example, the Rio Group reiterated its support, "for the start of negotiations without preconditions on an International Treaty that prohibits the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices, to include an international verification regime." In the Conference on Disarmament, one of the main impediments to starting negotiations on an FMCT is the United States' insistence that the treaty would not be verifiable.

Many delegations also called for greater confidence-building measures, as they establish mutual trust and cooperation among member

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## *Verification and Transparency (cont.)*

states. The speaker for the Rio Group stated, “Confidence-building measures, which are adopted voluntarily by States, play an important role in the preservation of international peace and security, as they can enhance understanding. Confidence-building measures can contribute in the prevention of conflicts and the promotion of relations and cooperation among States.”

The Reaching Critical Will project of WILPF maintains that accountability is democracy and transparency is security. It offers a Model Nuclear Inventory as a tool for confidence-building and accountability. An extreme lack of trust pervades the disarmament arena, and transparent information exchange on nuclear programs can increase confidence among states honouring their obligations. It can also act as an objective tool to hold those in non-compliance to account.

-Sarmadi Almecci and Ray Acheson, Reaching Critical Will ([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org))

## *International Court of Justice (cont.)*

disarmament obligation in the 1996 opinion. However, there is every indication that the ICJ would build on the 1996 opinion rather than revisit it. Since 1996, the States Parties of the NPT have agreed on a set of disarmament steps (the 13 practical steps agreed to in 2000) that give substance to the disarmament obligation. The Court would likely reinforce these and provide legal impetus for their implementation.

Another concern is that is that the Court may have difficulty dealing with the complexities of implementation of disarmament, and may therefore refuse to do so or do so inadequately. However, IALANA believes that there are clear legal principles involving general implementation of obligations that the ICJ would apply to the nuclear disarmament obligation, and that in doing so would strengthen the legal pressure for such implementation.

Finally, there is concern that an opinion from the ICJ would be ignored by the NWS and thus diminish the status of the Court, or at the very least be a waste of time. Regarding the standing of courts, it is generally accepted that their role is

to establish what the law is regardless of whether such an opinion is accepted by key actors. Dr. Burroughs notes, “in the words of U.S. Chief Justice Marshall in the landmark 1803 opinion, *Marbury v. Madison*, words which have shaped the evolution of constitutional law in the United States: ‘It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.’” Indeed, once the law has been established, implementation depends on a range of factors and actors. The 1996 ICJ opinion may have had only minimal impact to date on the policies of the NWS (possibly more impact on the UK than the other states), but has been very significant in strengthening the hand of the non-nuclear weapon States including the New Agenda Coalition, and in energizing and motivating civil society—including through citizens weapons inspections of ‘illegal’ nuclear facilities, in a number of domestic anti-nuclear court cases, and in promoting a nuclear weapons convention.

Thus, IALANA has been joined by a number of other international NGOs in supporting diplomatic efforts to achieve a United Nations General Assembly resolution in 2008 requesting the ICJ for an advisory opinion on compliance issues related to the nuclear disarmament obligation.

-Alyn Ware, International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms ([www.ialana.net](http://www.ialana.net))

### Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

The vast majority of governmental statements last week mentioned the need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). In his opening address as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Sergio Duarte emphasized the importance of the CTBT to the international disarmament regime, and the urgent necessity of its entry into force.

Under-Secretary-General Duarte's words echoed those of H.E. Bruno Stagno Ugarte, Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, at the Fifth Article XIV Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the CTBT in September, where he identified arguments for the universalization of the CTBT, including that the CTBT, "constrains the development and qualitative improvement of new and more advanced nuclear weapons; it severely constrains the capacity of non-nuclear weapon states to develop new nuclear weapons and it prevents the proliferation of materials, technologies and knowledge that can be used for nuclear weapons." At this same conference, the NGO community voiced its support for this critical tool for multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation, stating, "The CTBT is important to all states—North and South, East and West, large and small, with nuclear weapons and without. The CTBT is essential to the prevention of nuclear arms races, the development of increasingly more destructive weapons, the prevention of more states acquiring nuclear arsenals, and the protection of human health and the global environment from the devastating effects of nuclear weapons production and testing."

In the First Committee, the European Union (EU) delegation explained that the EU "places the utmost importance on the earliest possible entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to prohibit all nuclear weapon test explosions and other nuclear explosions."

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) expressed "serious concern that the development of nuclear weapons is in contravention with the assurances provided by nuclear-weapon-States at the conclusion of the CTBT," referring to efforts by nuclear weapon states (NWS) to modernize their arsenals with new types of nuclear weapons without explosive testing, a position that might

contravene their disarmament commitments. The NAM also recognized the significantly vital role of the NWS to contribute to the functioning of the disarmament and non-proliferation machinery and instruments in the construction and reinforcement of a global norm against nuclear testing. If "the objectives of the Treaty were to be fully realized, the continued commitment of all State signatories, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to nuclear disarmament would be essential." Each member of the NAM voiced their support for the NAM statement and many also made mention of the importance of the CTBT's entry into force at the earliest possible date.

The New Agenda Coalition, while calling for the speedy entry into force of the CTBT, also called "upon all States to uphold and maintain a moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions and any other nuclear explosions." China, though it has not yet ratified the treaty, "honors its commitment on nuclear test moratorium, and has been promoting careful review by the National People's Congress of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, with the view to ratifying the Treaty an early date."

At a panel discussion sponsored by the Middle Powers Initiative entitled Towards 2010: Priorities for NPT Consensus, Ambassador Johannes Landman of the Netherlands spoke on the importance of the CTBT as a complement to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and a vital link in the network of treaties designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. He cited its entry into force as both necessary and urgent in order to reinforce global norms of non-proliferation and disarmament. Several states called upon Israel to join the NPT and the CTBT in order to contribute to stability in the Middle East, and the possible creation of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone there. (See NWFZ report.)

Listening to the governmental statements to the First Committee, it became abundantly clear that the entry into force of the CTBT is both a high priority and urgent issue facing the Committee and the Office for Disarmament Affairs. Nearly every regional group, including the EU, the Caribbean Community, the Association of

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## North Korea's Nuclear Programme

Last year's nuclear weapon test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) highlighted the urgency and importance of the First Committee as forum for international cooperation and consensus. The test was widely condemned by member states. Since that time, the DPRK has continued to be engaged in Six-Party talks, the goal of which is the peaceful de-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Japan, China, Russia, the US, and South Korea are all party to the talks, and have in recent months made significant progress.

In late July, the International Atomic Energy Agency announced that the DPRK shut down and sealed its Yongbyon plutonium-producing reactor. The IAEA is now working to verify the status of two unfinished reactors, a spent fuel reprocessing facility, and a fuel fabrication plant. Last week, the DPRK government agreed to disclose all of its nuclear programs and materials and disable the Yongbyon facilities by the end of this year. The International Herald Tribune reported that technical experts from the US will draw up a specific plan for the Yongbyon disablement process, and that subsequent teams of experts will assist in carrying out the technical aspects. The DPRK is suspected to have produced enough plutonium at Yongbyon for a dozen nuclear bombs, including the detonation last October, the paper stated.

Throughout the first week of the First Committee, mention of the DPRK's nuclear test was a common element in many of the governmental and regional statements. The European Union, New Agenda Coalition, and Rio Group all cited the DPRK's nuclear test as a major concern of the non-proliferation regime, but lauded the current developments in negotiations with the DPRK and the progress towards the de-nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Several Asian states made mention of the situation, including China, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, and Indonesia, who expressed concern about the DPRK test, but urged the continuation of negotiations towards the peaceful de-nuclearization of the peninsula. Japan's statement called upon the DPRK "to comply promptly with the provisions of UNSCR 1718, and appeal to all UN Member States to fully implement its provisions....We urge the

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## Outer Space (cont.)

ties" (UNGA 61/75), and optimistically noted, "the increased number of co-sponsors and unanimous support of this resolution could be the first step towards drafting a universal agreement on preventing the militarization of space and the ensuring security of space objects."<sup>2</sup>

The European Union's statement recognized that preventing an arms race in outer space "is an essential condition for the strengthening of strategic stability," and noted that they had offered "concrete proposals" in response to resolution 61/75. The EU alone mentioned China's anti-satellite weapon test earlier this year, about which it remains "very concerned," though it refrained from calling China by name.

The Russian Federation remains the clear leader on this crucial issue of international peace and security. In addition to sponsoring once again the relatively new resolution on "Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities," and reiterating its pledge not to be the first to place weapons in space, the Russian delegation this week also noted its "draft Treaty on the Prevention of Placement of Weapons in Outer Space, Use or Threat of Use of Force Against Space Objects (PPWT)", which it first broached in the CD this year. It has yet to release the draft text to civil society, though it has circulated it informally among several governments, the comments from which Russia promises they will "take into account". This week, at a panel event sponsored by Russia, China, UNIDIR, the Secure World Foundation, and the Global Security Institute, Counselor Valery Semin will further elaborate on this highly anticipated proposal.

To hear more of the Russian proposal, as well as the laudable Space Security Index and other initiatives to strengthen our common security in outer space, be sure to attend the 15 October event, conveniently scheduled for 1:15 in Conference Room 4, and the Space Security Index event on 22 October at 1:15 in Conference Room 9.

-Rhianna Tyson, Global Security Institute ([www.gs institute.org](http://www.gs institute.org)) and Secure World Foundation ([www.secureworldfoundation.org](http://www.secureworldfoundation.org))

2. written statement only

### Nuclear Weapon Free Zones

Amidst the daunting challenges, setbacks, and paralyses confronting the disarmament and international security community, nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs) continue to inspire hope for a nuclear-free world. Forty years ago, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean created the world's first NWFZ through the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Today, NWFZs encompass the South Pacific, Southeast Asia, Africa, and most recently, Central Asia. In addition, Austria and Mongolia are each single state NWFZs, and Antarctica and Outer Space are both de facto NWFZs. All NWFZs prohibit the stationing, testing, use, and development of nuclear weapons on their territory. Each succeeding zone adds and builds on the strengths of the earlier ones.

During the General Debate, many countries lauded the significant contributions of NWFZs in promoting nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear restraint, as well as advancing complete nuclear disarmament. NWFZs further enhance and strengthen regional and international security by serving as effective confidence-building measures, increasing transparency, and encouraging dialogue among nation states.

While welcoming all existing NWFZs, many delegations expressed their interest and commitment in supporting the establishment of new NWFZs in other parts of the world.

The Non-Aligned Movement, along with Syria, Egypt, Malaysia, Turkey, Viet Nam, Bangladesh, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates, reiterated their call for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. In this regard, Egypt will present its annual resolution on "Establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East" and, along with the League of Arab States, a resolution on "The Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East". The delegations from Ukraine and Bangladesh called for South Asia to become a NWFZ. Apart from the proposals in this General Debate, the creation of NWFZs in Northeast Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, the Arctic/Nordic region, and the Mediterranean is currently under discussion in respective regions and at the UN.

The Rio Group and ASEAN, along with the

delegations of Malaysia, Viet Nam, Ghana, and Qatar, recognized the challenges facing current NWFZs in making their treaties fully operational and effective. Although NWFZs do not require the immediate support of nuclear weapon states (NWS) to enter-into-force, each NWFZ treaty includes protocols for accession by NWS, which provide security assurances for the NWFZ. In some instances, NWS have failed to endorse the protocols, or attached interpretive statements at the time of their accession to protect their nuclear deployment options. The Rio Group, referring to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, urged NWS "to withdraw the interpretive statements made at the time of their accession to the Protocols of this treaty." States Parties to the Southeast Asian NWFZ welcomed China's readiness to sign the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty, and called on the remaining NWS to sign on as soon as possible. Mongolia reaffirmed its intent "to institutionalize its nuclear-weapon-free status, with a view to achieving not only an internationally recognized but also a legally-binding NWFZ."

Efforts to strengthen existing NWFZs discussed during the General Debate include a resolution on achieving the objectives of the Southeast Asian NWFZ, entitled "Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty)," the proposal by Brazil and New Zealand for the creation of a Southern Hemisphere (and Adjacent Areas) NWFZ, as well as the recent measures to enhance cooperation and communication among NWFZs. In this regard, the successful international Conference of the Parties to NWFZs treaties, hosted by Mexico in April 2005, was a vital step forward. Follow-up meetings are planned to take place in the Pacific in 2010, Southeast Asia in 2015, and Africa in 2020.

-Monika Szymurska, Atomic Mirror  
([www.atomicmirror.org](http://www.atomicmirror.org))



## Missiles

As a topic that generally slips by under the radar, little attention is paid to the complicated issue of missiles. The sparse and pro-forma statements made by governments thus far in the General Debate of the UN General Assembly First Committee demonstrated minimal cognizance of the current status of the issue, thus indicating little enthusiasm for moving the agenda forward.

As noted by the Republic of Korea, the Third Panel of Governmental Experts on Missiles, established by UNGA resolution 59/67 (2004), met for its first session in June. Whereas the first panel, established by UNGA resolution 55/33 A (2000), was able to adopt a comprehensive factual report—though falling well short of drawing any actionable conclusions, much less recommendations—this third attempt follows the failure of the second panel to even adopt a final report, intended at the outset merely “to explore further the issue of missiles in all its aspects.” The mandate of the present Panel of Experts is “to explore further ways and means to address within the United Nations the issue of missiles in all its aspects, including identifying areas where consensus can be reached,” and to submit a report, expected to be completed by June 2008, to the sixty-third session of the General Assembly.

The report prepared in 2006 by the Secretary-General, with the assistance of UNIDIR, pursuant to UNGA resolution 59/67 (2004) and welcomed last year by resolution 61/59 (2006), provided a useful overview in understanding the lack of consensus on the issue of missiles. It explored three axes of divergence on dealing with the matter: *Priority*—Addressing missiles “as a distinct priority” (a more recent development) or in the context of nuclear weapon delivery systems and as part of broader nuclear disarmament mandates; *Scope*—Which type of missiles are to be covered, whether it be ballistic missiles, in its various classifications by range and payload, cruise missiles, man-portable air defense systems, or anti-ballistic missile systems; *Method*—Dealing with missiles in universal and inclusive forums, with legal or voluntary regimes, and on a case by case basis or in a comprehensive manner.

Statements made last week in the General Debate reflect continuing divergence on priority

and method, with little interest or will in bridging the gap. Nor are there any signs of a multilateral missile treaty emerging anytime soon, as was pointed out by High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Sergio Duarte. The European Union approached missiles only as “WMD delivery systems”, and continued “to promote the universal ratification of, and adherence to ... the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation.” Again repeating its contrary view, the Association of South East Asian Nations, in a statement delivered by Myanmar, cited “an urgent need for a comprehensive approach towards missiles proliferation,” and called for “multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory” agreements. This view is similar to the approach taken in the preamble of resolution 61/59, from which most European and NATO states abstained, in part due to the resolution’s lack of reference to the Hague Code of Conduct.

Ambassador Aitimova of Kazakhstan reiterated his country’s intention to become a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), and deplored that this request had not yet been granted. The MTCR has 34 members and, according to the October 2007 edition of Arms Control Today (ACT), is credited with constraining or ending missile programmes in many countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Iraq, South Africa, South Korea, Syria, and Taiwan. Despite this nominal success, ACT questioned the effectiveness of the MTCR, as notable MTCR non-members include key missile producing and exporting states India, Iran, the DPRK, and Pakistan. The non-universal and discriminatory approach of the MTCR is reminiscent of a prevailing theme in the post-Cold War pursuit of arms control, treating missiles as legitimate in the hands of some while rejecting their possession by others.

After signally the possibility of abandoning the INF Treaty earlier this year in response to an ongoing dispute, reminiscent of the Cold War, between the United States and Russia over US deployment of anti-ballistic missile radars and interceptors in Eastern Europe, Russia reaffirmed that it believes the treaty “remains important for

## Conventional Weapons

As Malaysia so aptly reminded its fellow delegates, “the destructive power from the blast of an anti-personnel mine or a shotgun may pale in comparison to the destructive power unleashed by the splitting of the atom or the fallout from chemical agents, however the suffering and pain brought to bear on victims from landmines or small arms attacks are real enough. They can also cause grave damage to the economic development of poor communities and countries.” A number of issues, including the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), the negotiation of an instrument on cluster munitions, man-portable air defense systems, and the UN Register of Conventional Arms were raised during this week’s General Debate.

The delegations from the Rio Group, the European Union, Switzerland, the United States, Ukraine, and New Zealand stated their support for the CCW. In particular, New Zealand acknowledged that it deposited its instrument of acceptance of the CCW’s Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War last week. This illustrates New Zealand’s “commitment to ending the post-conflict death, injury and suffering that result from the wide range of unexploded and abandoned ordnance that remain after hostilities have ended.”

Negotiations of a legally-binding international instrument for the regulation of cluster munitions were promoted. The South African, Australian and New Zealand delegates noted the importance of such an instrument, which could be established either within the CCW or in a separate process that began in Oslo earlier this year. The European Union believes that cluster munitions should remain within the purview of the CCW, and has submitted a proposal for a negotiating mandate on cluster munitions (CCW/GGE/2007/WP.3) to the CCW’s Group of Governmental Experts. Addressing cluster munitions would enable “the CCW to clearly show its relevance to matters of International Humanitarian Law.” The US also announced its readiness to work within the CCW framework to deal with cluster munitions, hoping that others will join them in this endeavor.

The importance of establishing transparency and confidence-building measures in the field of

conventional weapons was also raised. The Rio Group, the European Union, China, and Turkey spoke positively about the UN Register of Conventional Arms, with China noting that it has decided to “resume providing the Secretary-General annually with the requested data” for the register. However, Libya’s Ambassador Elgannas urged against a “selective approach” in the field of disarmament, and believes that “the approach characterized by transparency and the register of the United Nations of conventional weapons lacks balance in that it does not comprise other forms of weapons such as weapons of mass destruction and likewise, other aspects related to national capacities to produce, acquire and stockpile weapons.

The delegations from the Russian Federation and the Ukraine each discussed the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. The Russian Federation reiterated its intention to suspend its participation in the CFE, effective 12 December 2007, though it is still open to “continuation of a dialogue on restoring the viability of the Treaty’s regime.” Ukraine’s Ambassador Pokotylo stated his country’s concerns with the intention of “one state” to suspend implementation of the treaty, and also recognized that while the CFE is still “one of the most important multilateral documents on arms control ... the CFE Treaty of 1990 does not correspond to the current security circumstances in Europe.” He welcomed the efforts undertaken by the United States to begin parallel NATO and Russian courses of action.

The Australian delegation announced its intention to reintroduce its resolution on preventing the illicit transfer and unauthorized access to and use of Man Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS), which was last introduced in the 60th session of the General Assembly. “The consensus support given to this resolution in previous years reflects the depth of international concern about the threat from terrorists using such weapons.” The ASEAN group and Kazakhstan also spoke on MANPADS, and Turkey announced its intention to co-sponsor Australia’s resolution.

-Waverly de Bruijn, Global Action to Prevent War ([www.globalactionpw.org](http://www.globalactionpw.org))



## Arms Trade Treaty

Interest in an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) continued to be expressed during the General Debate in this year's UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security. Resolution 61/89, "Towards an Arms Trade Treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms" was adopted during the 61st session of the General Assembly with 153 votes in favor, 24 abstentions, and one "no" vote. This resolution asked the UN Secretary-General to take into account the views of member states on the creation of an ATT, and called for the establishment of a Group of Governmental Experts to examine the scope, feasibility, and draft parameters of such a treaty. Sergio Duarte, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, noted that the Office for Disarmament Affairs has received an unprecedented 97 submissions from member states, leading to the split distribution of the Secretary-General's report. While the first installment has already been published, the second and final installment of the report will be released on 17 October.

During this week's general statements, the European Union (EU), the Rio Group and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) spoke in favor of progress made towards an ATT. CARICOM will explore the aspects of an ATT to ensure that weapons purchasers comply with international humanitarian and human rights law, thereby "contributing to political stability and to peace and security in countries throughout the world."

Furthermore, Mexico, Brazil, Egypt, Ukraine, Ghana, Japan, Norway, Canada, Togo, Iceland, Switzerland, the Republic of Korea, Colombia, Senegal, South Africa, Australia, Kazakhstan, Bangladesh, Turkey, Argentina, Tanzania, Kenya and the United Arab Emirates comprised the 23 delegations who mentioned the ATT in their statements. The Republic of Korea hailed the ATT as a "landmark initiative," and Canada is "convinced that an Arms Trade Treaty ... would lead to fewer conflicts around the world." The delegates from Brazil and the Ukraine urged that an ATT be concluded in such a way so as to not interfere with the right of states to meet their legitimate defense needs.

Control Arms, a project of Oxfam, Amnesty

International, and the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) held an event this week featuring military generals and war correspondents who spoke of the need for an ATT from their perspectives. Retired Major-General Cammaert from the Netherlands expressed the frustration of "mopping the floor while the tap is still on," describing the constant battle to protect civilians and disarm rebel factions when, due to unregulated and illicit trade, they constantly acquire new weapons. Retired Brigadier-General Robin Gagnon stated that an ATT is something he has stood for all his life: "As long as weapons proliferation [to non-state actors] increases or remains the same, peace support operations will be very costly—in loss of human life, and in the economic and social sphere."

-Waverly de Bruijn, Global Action to Prevent War ([www.globalactionpw.org](http://www.globalactionpw.org))

### *North Korea (cont.)*

DPRK to take concrete actions according to the recently adopted 'Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement'."

In a right of reply statement, the DPRK characterized the EU and Japanese statements as not constructively contributing to the goal of de-nuclearization, but rather undermining the current cooperation and progress in the Six-Party talks. Japan was also cited as having been unduly harsh in not recognizing the threatening behaviour of certain states towards the DPRK, and the DPRK's right of self-defense through deterrence if necessary. Japan also gave a right of reply statement, in which it clarified its general statement as not having been a condemnation of the DPRK, but rather, a recognition of both concerns over nuclear proliferation and a call to continue progressing towards full de-nuclearization in the spirit of the agreements reached in the Six-Party talks.

-Anna Walther, Reaching Critical Will ([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org))

## Terrorism

During the General Debate, many delegations identified the potential threat of international terrorism as a key issue, particularly the possible acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and small arms by non-state actors. The link between disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons to terrorists was firmly made by High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte, who said disarmament and non-proliferation “are mutually reinforcing and even help to reduce risks of nuclear terrorism—for example, by strengthening controls over weapon-usable fissile materials.”

The speakers for ASEAN, the Republic of Korea, Cambodia, and Viet Nam seconded his argument, stating that proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their delivery systems pose a threat which must be given the utmost priority. US Ambassador Rocca agreed, saying, “Such a security situation includes clear and full compliance on the part of all states with their international obligations, particularly those under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).” However, according to the US delegation, “A world in which the community of nations works together to ensure that their territories do not provide safe haven for terrorists or the trafficking of WMD and the materials to produce them” is the prerequisite for ending “reliance upon nuclear weapons,” again arguing for non-proliferation before disarmament.

Several delegations suggested practical measures to prevent terrorist acquisition of WMD. Norway demanded stronger international cooperation to prevent nuclear terrorism and presented its activities in minimizing the use of highly enriched uranium in the civilian sector. Kazakhstan mentioned the joint undertaking with the Russian Federation in creating an uranium-enrichment centre.

Suriname’s delegation, on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) expressed concern over the transnational shipment of nuclear waste, because of “the risk of an accident or worse yet a terrorist attack on one of these shipments,” and called for the total cessation of these shipments.

UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (UNSCR 1540), on the proliferation of WMD, and

the 1540 Committee received support from the majority of delegations who mentioned terrorism for its activities against the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery. The US emphasized, “not only is international security enhanced, but capacities applicable to other national priorities are built.”

Canada’s Ambassador Grinius welcomed the results of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, and called upon all participants to fulfil the goals established during the G8 Kananaskis Summit in 2002. Togo’s Ambassador Kpotsra stressed that the fight against terrorism exceeds capabilities of small states and called upon the international community to tackle these challenges collectively. The Portuguese delegation, on behalf of the EU, called for the full implementation of UNSCR 1540 and UNSCR 1673, and offered its assistance to State Parties.

Speakers from the EU and Turkey mentioned the adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the UN General Assembly Resolution 60/288. The EU stressed the pursuit of the implementation of this strategy, as well as the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism, and demanded that all state measures must comply with “international law, in particular human rights law, refugee law and international humanitarian law.” It named the principles adopted by the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, which were also mentioned by the delegations of Australia, Turkey, the Russian Federation, the US, and Kazakhstan as complementary to the UNSCR 1540 and the Proliferation Security Initiative. The Russian Federation’s Ambassador Antonov was pleased to discern that subscribing states to the Global Initiative had reaffirmed their obligations under the International Convention for the Suppression of Act of Nuclear Terrorism and under the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

While most of the attention of the First Committee and other international fora is devoted to preventing terrorist acquisition of nuclear weapons, acts of terrorism conducted throughout the world rely on the readily available supply of conventional weapons and small arms. Brazil’s Ambassador

*continued on page 19*



## Small Arms and Light Weapons

The General Debate offered an opportunity for many delegations to reiterate their commitment to fighting the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW), and their commitment to work within UN multilateral structures to do so. Almost all states who spoke about the issue affirmed that the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Transfer of Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects offers an effective and relevant basis for work on the issue.

The July 2006 Review Conference on that Programme of Action (PoA) did not conclude with any substantive outcomes, and the Republic of Korea, Qatar, and others took the opportunity to reiterate their disappointment. However, many states also said they were hopeful of continuing with substantive work, looking towards the 2008 Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) for further discussion on PoA implementation.

Several delegations referenced this year's draft omnibus resolution on small arms, which will be co-sponsored by Colombia, Japan, and South Africa, and will form the basis of preparation for work at the 2008 BMS. New Zealand, the African Group, and others are looking forward to this meeting, which will consider the national, regional, and global implications of the PoA. At this meeting, states will have an opportunity to report on implementation measures they have taken on the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (often referred to as the "marking and tracing mechanism").

The Non-Aligned Movement, Republic of Korea, and Kenya highlighted the work of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Illicit Brokering, which released a report in June 2007. High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte said he hoped the GGE recommendations would be heeded.

Some delegations raised other SALW-related issues. The representatives from El Salvador and Venezuela called for munitions to also be part of work on SALW.

Argentina, New Zealand, Cambodia, Angola, and the Philippines, CARICOM, and others

framed the importance of combating the illicit trade in SALW in humanitarian terms. Ambassador Viotti of Brazil said, "Easy access to small arms and light weapons exacerbates conflicts, facilitates violent crime and terrorism, impedes post-conflict reconstruction and undermines long-term sustainable development."

Some statements emphasized work done on an informal basis, and outside the UN structures as well. The European Union and New Zealand delegations praised an informal meeting in Geneva convened by Canada and Switzerland on transfer control principles, and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte praised the work of the Geneva Process, which is an informal process that brings together civil society and governments to sustain the work on the PoA. The Philippines' Ambassador recognized "the role of civil society in addressing the issue of trafficking of these types of weapons through various mechanisms designed to establish and promote a culture of peace."

-Gabriel Morden-Snipper, Quaker United Nations Office ([www.quno.org](http://www.quno.org))

### *Terrorism (cont.)*

Viotti stated, "easy access to small arms and light weapons (SALW) exacerbates conflicts, facilitates violent crime and terrorism, impedes post-conflict reconstruction and undermines long-term sustainable development." Likewise, the Cambodian delegation argued, "We cannot undermine the illegal use and circulation of small and light weapons as they can be equally dangerous source of terrorism, violence and regional conflicts."

As Under-Secretary-General Duarte and several other delegations noted, the existence of nuclear materials sustains the possibility of terrorists acquiring and using those materials. Dr. Graham Allison of Harvard University wrote, "Physics is on our side: no fissile material, no nuclear explosion, no nuclear terrorism."

-Philip Urech, NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

## Disarmament and Development

Several states emphasized the relationship between disarmament and development in their general states during the first week of the First Committee. The most concerned states were, predominantly though not exclusively, developing countries, whom this issue affects directly.

Several states and groups of states including the Rio Group, the European Union (EU), the African Group, Tunisia, Bangladesh, Kenya, Cuba, and others mentioned the enormous quantities of resources allocated to military expenditures—currently more than 1.2 trillion USD—while funds for development assistance remain far below such levels. Cuba's comments weresome of the most striking: "While resources are so squandered, some say, hypocritically, that there are no funds to tackle the very serious problems stemming from poverty and marginalization ... With just 10% of the current military expenditure, the Millennium Development Goals could be achieved." Cuba also referred to the annual draft resolution to be submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) on the relationship between disarmament and development, calling on the "only country that voted against this resolution" last year to "reconsider its position."

The EU, in its statement delivered by Portugal's Ambassador Gomes, recognized that development, peace, security, and human rights are interrelated, and called for "efforts in the fields, of development assistance, poverty reduction, and the promotion of human rights and the rule of law" as means to promote peace and security. The delegation from Colombia mentioned the issue of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) disarmament and its relation to development, citing decrease in small arms-related crime in Cali and Bogotá as a result of disarmament campaigns.

Referring to the work of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the Kenyan representative stated, "there could be no development without security and no security without development. The ultimate guarantee of human rights presupposes development and security." Thus, the issue of disarmament and development is not only an issue of the allocation of finite resources among contending national interests, but also involves a dynamic interdependence between security and

development. As Jayantha Dhanapala, former Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament, argues, "in many cases, savings on defense could make a big difference to human development, while an environment of security would facilitate a lowering of military expenditure."

A dilemma that can only be solved multilaterally, the disarmament and development relationship remains a delicate issue, with balance to be sought in the implementation of proposals ultimately seeking to ensure human rights for people across the globe currently suffering from a lack of resources that, when redirected from arms expenditures to development, can bring both security and development.

-Anna Walter, Reaching Critical Will  
([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org))

### *Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (cont.)*

Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Rio Group mentioned this issue and its urgency.

The CTBT's entry into force, though overwhelmingly endorsed by states and civil society, is being waylaid by a small handful of states who either refuse to sign or, having signed, have not yet taken the necessary steps to secure its ratification in their various legal systems. It is imperative that these states, in line with the Article XIV provisions of the treaty, ratify at the earliest possible date in order to uphold the global norms of disarmament and non-proliferation, and to ensure the effective monitoring of nuclear testing activities.

-Anna Walther, Reaching Critical Will  
([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org))

### *Missiles (cont.)*

maintaining strategic security and stability," and that it is "crucial for ensuring effective world nuclear disarmament." Russia's Ambassador Antanov called upon "all countries, primarily those with missile capabilities, to jointly consider strengthening of the Treaty's regime."

-Michael Spies, Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy ([www.lcnpp.org](http://www.lcnpp.org))



## Biological and Chemical Weapons

During the General Debate, many delegations mentioned biological and chemical weapons as belonging to the category of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) alongside nuclear weapons. There was broad approval for the universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, and support for Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004).

Overall, delegates welcomed the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the CWC, which was held on 27 September 2007. Participants at this high-level commemorative meeting stressed the need for complete destruction of chemical weapons by the deadline of 2012 established by the Convention. Switzerland's Ambassador Streuli congratulated Albania for being the first State Party to have completely eliminated its chemical weapons stockpile, which was confirmed by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in July 2007.

With the current membership of 182 States Parties, the CWC is close to achieving universality, thereby giving the OPCW the title of the fastest growing disarmament organization in the world. In expressing its "regret that [the CWC] has not yet acquired universal status," Ukraine's Ambassador Pokotylo stated his country's readiness to "host, together with other interested parties to the Convention and under the support of the OPCW, an International Conference dedicated to the issues of joining the Convention by the [13] states remaining outside the CWC."

According to the OPCW, over one-third of the world's chemical weapon stockpiles have already been destroyed. However, much work remains to be done. In particular, the United States and the Russian Federation, who were granted a five year extension in 2006 to destroy their stockpiles, did not explicitly commit to meeting the new deadline of 29 April 2012 in their tenth anniversary messages.

The European Union's General Debate statement mentioned the OPCW as "an inspiring example for effective multilateralism in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament." While Tunisia's Ambassador Mansour stressed the im-

portance of advancing international cooperation concerning chemical industries for peaceful purposes, South Africa and New Zealand's delegations stated their anticipations of the Second Review Conference of the CWC, which is due to take place in April 2008.

Meanwhile, the Sixth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) in December 2006 resulted in the unanimous adoption of measures to strengthen the implementation of the BTWC, such as the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) operating out of the Geneva Branch of the Office of Disarmament Affairs. The ISU was established in August 2007 with the main objective of assisting States Parties.

The BTWC Conference furthermore agreed on an intersessional programme, to be held prior to the Seventh Conference of States Parties in 2011, action plans, and an update on the confidence-building measures that call for information exchange between Member States. Several delegations suggested the implementation of an effective verification mechanism to strengthen the BTWC. While Malaysia's delegation proposed similar measures to the ones in place in the CWC, Ukraine's Ambassador Pokotylo based his remarks on a comparison to the International Atomic Energy Agency machinery.

Sergio Duarte, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, mentioned the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters report on "emerging weapons technologies, including outer space aspects," which drew attention to dangers originating from the rapid advancement in the field of biotechnology.

Furthermore, the delegation from the Republic of Korea emphasized the importance of enhancing the effectiveness of controls on materials and technology related to WMD, citing the Australia Group as an example.

-Edgar Socarras and Philip Urech, NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

## Landmines

2007 marks the tenth anniversary of the Ottawa Convention on the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (also known as the Mine Ban Treaty). During the General Debate many delegations praised and supported the Convention, with South Africa's Ambassador Mtshali stating, "the fact that the Treaty has tarnished as morally reprehensible the transfer or use of APMs [anti-personnel mines] in modern warfare across the globe speaks of its success as a highly effective instrument of international humanitarian law."

Participants called for further progress towards a "mine free world" through full implementation and universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty. In a statement delivered by Ambassador Gomes of Portugal, the European Union (EU) called on countries that had not ratified the Convention to provide their support to maintain the momentum of the Treaty. The delegations from Turkey, South Africa, Honduras, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Dominican Republic (on behalf of Rio group), and Cambodia also expressed similar views.

Delegations from Latin America and South East Asia also called on states to become party to the Convention, and provided regional commitment to the destruction of stockpiles. Malaysia and Bangladesh reported they have destroyed all landmine stockpiles, with Malaysia being the first country to do so in Asia. Honduras stated that it was undertaking pioneering work in demining, while the Rio Group, through the Organisation of American States demining program and assistance from UN Mine Action Service, was "committed to making the hemisphere a zone free of anti-personal mines."

Cambodia's Ambassador Kosal outlined the devastating humanitarian and economic impact of landmines, speaking as a citizen of one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. He called landmines "silent killers that have destroyed the lives of many innocent people and maimed countless others," and reported that mine clearance was a priority in Cambodia's national agenda, with the removal of 1.5 million mines as of July 2007. Meanwhile, delegates from Bangladesh, South Africa, the EU and New Zealand called on member states to assist

highly affected states with necessary funding and assistance for mine clearance and victim rehabilitation.

Australia, as President of the Meeting of State Parties, voiced its support for the Convention that has "stemmed the tide of suffering caused by landmines, by banning a heinous weapon class." Australia, along with President Designate Jordon and preceding President Croatia, has committed to reintroducing a draft resolution on the Convention in the First Committee. Further, to mark the tenth anniversary of the Treaty, Australia will chair a panel on the Convention's impact on 23 October.

Mongolia, a non-signatory to the Convention, stated that while it had not acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty, it does support its principles. This was one of the strongest statements from a non-signatory state. To support this principal, Mongolia has submitted its first report under Article VII of the Convention. Other non-signatory nations provided minimal statements on the Treaty.

The Mine Ban Treaty is one of the most comprehensive international instruments for eliminating an entire class of weapon. It deals with everything from mine use, production and trade, to victim assistance, mine clearance, and stockpile destruction. Those working towards new initiatives on cluster munitions and depleted uranium would do well to take note of the progress and challenges the Mine Ban Treaty has faced in its ten years, and aim for nothing short of the total eradication being achieved by this landmark Convention.

-Kavitha Suthanthiraraj, Global Action to Prevent War ([www.globalactionpw.org](http://www.globalactionpw.org))



## Negative Security Assurances

Negative Security Assurances—promises from nuclear weapon states not to attack non-nuclear weapon states with nuclear weapons—have been discussed by the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security for several years. Many nuclear weapon states have made verbal commitments not to use nuclear weapons in an attack on a non-nuclear weapon state, but have been reluctant to sign any legally-binding commitments to that effect, including some Nuclear Weapons Free Zone treaties.

Developing nations focused heavily on negative security assurances during the General Debate this week. Ambassador del Rosario (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the Rio Group, stressed the need for the “conclusion of a universal, unconditional, legally-binding agreement on negative security assurances for non-nuclear weapon states at the earliest date.” This sentiment was echoed throughout the debate; the Non-Aligned Movement, spoken for by Indonesia, the New Agenda Coalition, represented by Mexico, and Nigeria on behalf of the African Group, all emphasized the need for such an instrument, as did the delegations of Malaysia, Switzerland, South Africa, Kazakhstan, Cuba, Ghana, Mongolia, Suriname (on behalf of the Caribbean Community), Libya, and the United Arab Emirates.

The nuclear weapon states had a more mixed view of the concept of negative security assurances. China has in previous years supported an international, legally-binding commitment to negative security assurances. This year, the Chinese delegation emphasized its policy of no-first-use and reiterated its commitment to a policy of negative security assurances. However, it did not call for a legally-binding instrument, nor did it call on other nuclear weapon states to adopt policies of negative security assurances, both of which it has done in previous years. The Russian Federation’s Ambassador Antonov, by contrast, did come out in favor of at least a limited version of legally-binding negative security assurances. He suggested the Russian Federation would not be opposed to “the elaboration of a global arrangement on providing such assurances to

non-nuclear states, which would prohibit the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, taking into account the exceptional cases stipulated for in the nuclear powers’ military doctrines determining when such weapons could be used.” Neither the United States nor the European Union made any mention of negative security assurances in their statements..

Viet Nam’s delegation said, “[w]e are also convinced that pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, effort to conclude a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon-states should be pursued as a matter of high priority.” This seemed to be the sentiment of the majority of the First Committee delegates. Granting legally-binding negative security assurances would afford an opportunity for the nuclear weapon states to demonstrate their commitment to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which included a goal to negotiated negative security assurances as part of the 1995 Package of Decisions adopted by the NPT Review and Extension Conference. It would also be a significant incentive for non-nuclear weapon states to remain a member of the NPT in good standing, and would bolster confidence in the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

-Nathan Band, Global Security Institute ([www.gs institute.org](http://www.gs institute.org))

United Nations General Assembly – 62<sup>nd</sup> Session  
First Committee Lunchtime Side-Event

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research UNIDIR  
Government of the Russian Federation

**16 October 2007**

## **Preventing Cyber-warfare: ICTs and International Security**

**Room IV                      13:15 – 14:45**

Chair

Kerstin VIGNARD, Editor in Chief, *Disarmament Forum*,  
UNIDIR

Opening remarks

Valery SEMIN, Senior Counsellor  
Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation  
to the Conference on Disarmament

Presentation

Maura CONWAY, Lecturer  
School of Law and Government, Dublin City University

While global connectivity and development of ICTs have produced undeniable positive benefits, our reliance on ICTs and their ubiquitous nature have created new vulnerabilities. There is increasing concern that these vulnerabilities can or will be exploited through cyber-warfare, cyber-terrorism, or attacks on critical information infrastructure.

The latest issue of UNIDIR's quarterly journal, *Disarmament Forum*, presents a range of topics on information security: legal aspects of cyberspace and information warfare relating to national and international security; cyberterrorism and Internet governance issues; risks to critical information infrastructure; and how international and regional forums address information security issues.

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