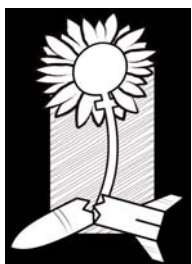


THE FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

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



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Contributing groups to THE FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR include:

**Global Action to Prevent War;
Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy;
NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security;
The Undiplomatic Times
United Methodist United Nations Office;
Unitarian Universalist UN Office;
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom;
World Council of Churches;
and others.**



The Monitor is a weekly report produced by the NGO Working Group on the First Committee, a collaborative effort undertaken by 9 non-governmental organizations to make the work of the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security more transparent and useful for those not based in New York. *The Monitor* is compiled, edited and coordinated by Reaching Critical Will, a disarmament project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. RCW, supported by the NGO Working Group on the First Committee, provides several services to activists, diplomats, UN staffers, academicians and others, including:

* Posting statements, draft resolutions, and First Committee information online at
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* Serving as an information resource by email or phone;

* Providing a link between the First Committee and NGOs who are not in New York.

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Introduction

The 60th session of the General Assembly's First Committee, mandated to address disarmament, peace and security, has concluded in a year of symbolism-laden expectations that, to date, have been unfulfilled. The First Committee faced a frustrating, polarized situation and in some small ways, stood up and insisted on making progress in disarmament, even if that progress was often contested.

For our readers' easy reference, this Final Edition of The First Committee Monitor includes action taken in the final two days of the First Committee Session, as well as summaries of the rest of the month. We are also including articles from prior editions of the Monitor so every issue the First Committee addressed this year can be found here.

Not unlike other international disarmament fora, definitive and substantive progress was impeded in the First Committee this year. During the first week of the First Committee, the United States reminded the world that it does not support linking negotiations of a Fissile Materials Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) to "unrelated issues", meaning it does not support the near consensus program of work in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). (See Disarmament Machinery Report and Fissile Materials Report)

Moreover, the US hardened its position against the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS); changing its abstention on the PAROS resolution to a loud and lonely no vote, while Israel was the only abstainer. (See PAROS Report)

The US also introduced a significantly tougher version of the biannual resolution on verification and compliance, which downplayed the role of international law and promoted US-led plurilateral initiatives instead. Iran, not to be outdone, introduced a new draft resolution calling for the Nuclear Weapon States to fulfill their disarmament obligations agreed at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences. (See Verification and Nuclear Disarmament Reports) The US had quantitatively more no votes than any other Member State, including the Nuclear Weapon States, with 24 no votes out of 61 possible votes and 36 votes taken. (See Introduction Week 4)

However, the First Committee also took some risks this year, though many more are merited. In dealing with weapons systems, the First Committee had three new small arms resolutions, including one that linked small arms with development along the lines of the mandate provided by the World Summit. A vote was called for on the small arms omnibus resolution because it was not progressive enough. (See SALW Report) China voted for the annual resolution in support of the Mine Ban Treaty for the first time, though it is still not party to the Treaty. (See Landmines Report)

The New Agenda Coalition (NAC) decided to vote for the Japanese nuclear disarmament resolution in solidarity, despite having reservations. Both the NAC and Japan reworked their resolutions this year in light of the failed Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. (See New Agenda and Renewed Determination Report)

In dealing with the dysfunctional disarmament machinery tasked with addressing these weapons systems, the First Committee delved into issues of consensus and unilateralism. The conversation on the purpose of consensus and its abuse will continue as various international disarmament fora struggle to adapt to a changed, and changing, geopolitical context. (See Introduction Week 3 and Disarmament Machinery Weeks 1 and 2) On the last day of the First Committee, Mexico insisted the Disarmament Commission adopt an agenda by the beginning of its 2006 session, by vote if necessary. A new alliance of six countries, Brazil, Canada, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand and Sweden, presented a creative proposal to the First Committee to establish four open-ended ad-hoc committees under the General Assembly consistent with the Five Ambassadors' (A5) proposal for a Conference on Disarmament (CD) programme of work. Although a draft resolution was not tabled, it caused a stir and demonstrated creative problem solving to address the deadlock in the CD. If there is no progress in the world's sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the resolution will hopefully be tabled next year with broader support. (See Disarmament Machinery Report)

The First Committee also assessed its own procedures and made suggestions for continued reform and revitalization. (See First Committee Revitalization Report) The First Committee formalized its positive collaboration with civil society and held a precedent-setting interactive discussion with NGO experts on disarmament education at the final session of thematic debate. (See Disarmament Education Report)

All these inches of movement count because they are cumulative, but we still have miles to go, both inside and outside the UN. We can all win a sustainable democratic world based on human security, or we can all tragically lose and animate our worst nightmares, and we have to make that choice every day. To win, we have to make the decision to cooperate and build a world that works for all of us, which means working through our fears and suspicions, "trusting but verifying", and using our tools as we develop and build a cooperative security framework together.

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Nuclear Disarmament

The General Debate held the first week of the First Committee was marked by a chorus of "frustration," "disappointment," "concern," "regret," and "pity" over the failure of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) 2005 Review Conference and the World Summit to achieve consensus on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament measures. Egypt described the 60th session of the General Assembly as "taking place in an atmosphere that can best be described as overcast, especially with regard to the issues of disarmament and international security." Despite the perception of crisis, during ensuing weeks of Committee deliberations, the positions of states changed little on the critical nuclear disarmament issues. These time-hardened positions have given rise to a number of static annual resolutions. That the support for these texts has remained indefatigable is an annual testament to the will of the international community, despite the appearance of hopeless deadlock. However, some initiatives have sought to break through the deadlock, exhibiting flexibility and achieving moderate successes in achieving a new consensus. (See Renewed Determination and A New Agenda report.)

Draft resolution L.46, on the "International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion," passed with 103 votes in favor, 29 against, with 21 abstentions. The no votes and abstentions were split amongst the EU and NATO states. However, New Agenda members Sweden, Ireland, and New Zealand ignored the North-South divide and voted yes. An explanation of vote by one of the abstaining states, Japan, probably reflects a widespread view, namely that OP 2 of the resolution is premature in calling for early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention. A separate vote was taken on OP 1, which underlines "the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control." This paragraph was accepted by 142 states and rejected by Israel, Russia, and the United States, with five states abstaining. Among the states voting yes were India and Pakistan. Since the obligation as stated by the ICJ applies to all states, as noted by Malaysia in introducing the resolution, it appears that the two South Asian states accept that they are bound by it.

The omnibus resolution L.36, "Nuclear Disarmament," was approved by a divided vote, 94 in favor, 42 against, with 17 abstentions. Sponsored by Myanmar and many other NAM members, the resolution comprehensively enumerates disarmament measures. Its spirit is illustrated by the call (OP 20) for the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on a "phased programme" leading to the "eventual total elimination of nuclear weapons." Similar to previous years,

no votes came mostly from EU and NATO aligned states, with abstentions mostly from former Eastern-bloc states. However, New Zealand crossed boundaries to vote yes.

The vote on L.52 "Reducing Nuclear Danger," followed the same pattern as L.36, with 94 votes in favor, 45 against, primarily EU and NATO, and 14 abstentions, primarily from former Eastern-bloc states. The resolution, sponsored by India, calls for urgent steps, especially by the five NPT Nuclear Weapon States, to reduce the risk of accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons. The vote on L.54, "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons," was nearly identical, with 97 in favor, 46 against, and 11 abstentions.

Due to Iran's efforts to shore up support, action was delayed until October 31, the next to last day, on L.38Rev.2, "Follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed in the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The revised draft dropped the establishment of an ad hoc committee on compliance, so that the resolution serves only to call upon the Nuclear Weapon States to comply with certain of the commitments made in the practical disarmament steps adopted by the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The commitments are those specified in step nine, namely further unilateral reductions, increased transparency, reduction of non-strategic weapons, reduction of operational status of nuclear weapons, a diminishing role for nuclear weapons, and engagement of all Nuclear Weapon States in the disarmament process.

Iran did not explain why only some of the commitments made in 2000 were selected. The resolution also seems superfluous in view of the affirmation of the 2000 outcome contained in the New Agenda and its application by other resolutions. However, given that Iran's draft, unlike other resolutions, focuses solely in its operative provisions on obligations of Nuclear Weapon States, it would appear to be a sort of gamesmanship showing that two can play at accusations of non-compliance with NPT obligations. Based on a past history of concealment, Iran was found to be in non-compliance with its safeguards agreement in a divided September 24 vote of the IAEA Board. Iran's draft in a way invites one to imagine that if there was a similar Disarmament Board to assess the behavior of the Nuclear Weapons States, it would find breaches of the 2000 commitments, especially by the United States. It is troubling that the hard-won commitments of 2000 would be employed in this way; they are already under enough stress as it is. Further, especially when dealing with matters as grave as nuclear weapons, any implication that violations by one state excuse violations by another must be rejected.



Renewed Determination & A New Agenda

Beginning in 1998, the New Agenda Coalition (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden) has blazed a path towards overcoming North-South divisions that for many years have impeded unity in pressure for disarmament. The Japan-led group has followed suit; co-sponsors of Japan's resolution this year were Australia, Bangladesh, Chile, Italy, Nepal, Nicaragua, Spain, Switzerland, and Ukraine. Encouragingly, other efforts have emerged as well, with the Group of Six (Brazil, Canada, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden) initiative on establishment of ad hoc committees and the Seven Nation Initiative (Australia, Chile, Indonesia, Norway, Romania, South Africa, United Kingdom), which played an important but ultimately not successful role in World Summit negotiations. However, with the withdrawal of the Group of Six initiative and the decision of the Seven Nation Initiative not to offer a resolution, in this year's First Committee the New Agenda and Renewed Determination resolutions remained the two leading cross-boundary efforts.

Striving to reach even wider support after a year of setbacks for disarmament and non-proliferation at the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and the World Summit, Japan and the New Agenda Coalition displayed flexibility in offering revised versions of their annual resolutions and engaging in broad consultations. The result is manifest in the many votes picked up. A number of NATO states shifted to support the New Agenda resolution, L.4, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments." The New Agenda Coalition reciprocated Japan's continued support for its resolution by voting en bloc in favor of Japan's resolution, L.28, "Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons," notwithstanding their preference that it contain stronger references to the practical steps and unequivocal undertaking to eliminate nuclear arsenals agreed in 2000. Perhaps coming years will see a realization of the reform aim of consolidation of resolutions through a merger of the two efforts.

By a vote of 166 to two (India, United States), with seven abstentions, the First Committee overwhelmingly approved the "Renewed Determination" draft. Nearly all governments in the world, including close allies of the Nuclear Weapon States, are therefore on record as favoring application of the principles of transparency, irreversibility, and verification "in the process of working towards the elimination of nuclear weapons" (OP 3). While those principles are embedded in the 2000 NPT Review Conference outcome, the resolution is praiseworthy for the clear and unambiguous way it declares that the principles, together, are inherent in effective reduction and elimination. The resolution also acutely singles out

two other general commitments from 2000 whose fulfillment would greatly facilitate progress towards abolition and make for a safer world now: "the necessity of a diminishing role for nuclear weapons in security policies" (OP 7); and reduction of "the operational status of nuclear weapons systems" (OP 8). In addition to reiterating these and other commitments (e.g. the CTBT and a fissile materials treaty) made in 2000, the resolution acknowledges the changes in U.S.-Russian relations since 2000, omitting references to START and the ABM Treaty and instead calling for full implementation of the 2002 Moscow Treaty and for further reductions (OP 4). In addition, in a provision applicable to all nuclear-armed states, it calls for "deeper reductions in all types of nuclear weapons" (OP 3). The resolution also "stresses" the importance of non-proliferation efforts, including universalization of the Additional Protocol (OP 11).

While the resolution "recalls" rather than reaffirms the 2000 outcome and does not mention the 2000 unequivocal undertaking to eliminate nuclear arsenals, it captures most of the key 2000 elements. Two significant differences are that it does not make commencement of negotiations on a fissile materials treaty contingent upon agreement on a program of work in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), nor does it call for the establishment of a CD subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament as part of such a program. Whatever one's evaluation of the wisdom or practicality of separating negotiations on a fissile materials treaty from other elements - PAROS, security assurances, nuclear disarmament - of a CD program, it does comport with the commitment on fissile materials made at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. A statement from China illustrated its continuing insistence on the linkage opposed by the United States. One of the "basic principles of nuclear disarmament," China said, is that "preventing the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space would be conducive to promoting the process of nuclear disarmament."

The First Committee's approval of the New Agenda resolution, by a vote of 144 to five (France, India, Israel, United Kingdom, United States), with 19 abstentions, is a resounding affirmation of the outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference as "the framework for systematic and progressive efforts towards nuclear disarmament" (OP 1). It implicitly repudiates the U.S. position that practical disarmament steps specified in 2000 are mere "political" commitments to be discarded at will based on unilateral determinations that circumstances have changed. Like the "Renewed Determination" resolution, it supports an understanding of the core principles, measures and undertakings of the 2000 outcome as providing authoritative criteria for interpreting and applying the NPT Article VI disarmament obligation.

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Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space

Throughout this year's First Committee, many Member States expressed strong support for moving ahead with negotiations on outer space issues. In particular, they focused on the re-establishment of a Conference on Disarmament (CD) Ad Hoc Committee on PAROS. Russia, Pakistan, Kazakhstan and Sri Lanka all expressed the hope that such a committee would reinvigorate debate on the adoption of a legally binding document relating to the weaponization of outer space. The US, however, continued to oppose attempts to create such a document, arguing that the existing multilateral arms control regime is sufficient and that there is no need to address a "non existent threat." John Bolton, US Ambassador to the United Nations, echoed this view at a G8 Senior Group Meeting last year, stating "[w]e are not prepared to negotiate on the so-called arms race in outer space. We just don't see that as a worthwhile enterprise." The UK also warned against adopting additional legal instruments, suggesting that a more practical approach would be to adopt 'rules of the road' on PAROS.

This year the new Russian draft resolution 'Measures to Promote Transparency and Confidence Building in Outer Space' and the annual 'PAROS' resolution introduced by Sri Lanka were both adopted by an overwhelming majority, with only the United States voting against them and Israel abstaining. As Sri Lanka noted last year in the First Committee, "the annual presentation of the PAROS resolution in the First Committee and the almost universal endorsement of its principles...has had the salutary effect of according to these objectives the status of customary law".

However, this fact is unlikely to have any influence over the United States, which has hardened its position on this issue during the past year. For years the US has abstained on the PAROS resolution, but voted against it this year, stating that there is "no arms race to address." In light of the US withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and the Bush Administration's clear pursuit of further militarization of space, this is a disturbing development. Lance Lord, head of the US Air Force Space Command, has been forthright about US ambitions, stating in a recent congressional appearance that "[w]e must establish and maintain space superiority. That means freedom to attack as well as freedom from attack."

The driving forces behind such ambitions were discussed at the 'Space Security: Core Issues and Questions' side event co-hosted by the Global Security Institute and Spacesecurity.org. Aaron Tovish compared the United States' current quest for dominance in outer space to the US military's belief in 1945 that they would have a monopoly over the production of nuclear weapons for at least two decades, an illusion discussed in the book *The Making of the Atomic Bomb* by Richard Rhodes. The current Long Range Plan (LRP) of the US Space Command states that since "the United States does not expect to face a global peer competitor within the next two decades...this period offers the US

military and opportunity...for exploring innovative war-fighting concepts and capabilities," a strategy read by Jonathan Granoff of Global Security Institute at the same event.

All of this begs the question of whether it is possible for the rest of the international community to truly prevent the weaponization of space without the cooperation of the United States, given they have the largest number of military space assets and greatest control over outer space resources. The draft resolution proposing the creation of four open-ended ad-hoc committees under the General Assembly (including one ad-hoc committee on PAROS) provided a creative solution to this dilemma, using the voting power of the General Assembly to mitigate against the continued abuse of consensus rules in the CD. However, as this resolution was not tabled in the First Committee this year, substantive debate on how such a committee would impact on PAROS negotiations was minimal. The hope remains, however, that the possibility of this resolution being re-introduced in a more 'potent form' next year will spur the 2006 session of the CD into action, leading to substantive and meaningful work on PAROS. History has shown that one country will not dominate military technology for long, and Russia noted during the General Debate that although it will not be the first to put weapons in space, if another State does it will act accordingly. Without preventive action, the world will be left with another ever-spiraling multi-billion dollar race for destruction.

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Renewed Determ. & New Agenda, Cont.

(See Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy, "Thirteen Practical Steps: Legal or Political?", May 2005, <http://lcnp.org/disarmament/npt/13stepspaper.htm>.)

Unlike the Renewed Determination resolution, the New Agenda draft does not identify specific measures for moving forward. Rather it serves as a strong signal of the continued normative force of the 2000 commitments, while avoiding controversy regarding current priorities. In accordance with the New Agenda view that compliance on the two fronts is mutually reinforcing, the resolution also calls for states "to comply fully" with non-proliferation as well as disarmament commitments.

Fourteen NATO members voted for the New Agenda draft, with six (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, and Slovakia) joining those that voted for last year's resolution (Belgium, Canada, Germany, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, and Turkey).

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Disarmament Machinery

Nearly all the statements during the General Debate opened with paragraphs of disappointment over the past year's disarmament and non-proliferation failures. These generally identified the Non-Proliferation Treaty's failure to achieve any substantive outcome, the Conference on Disarmament's repeated failure to agree on a program of work, the World Summit's failure to include a section on disarmament and non-proliferation, and often included the Disarmament Commission's inability to agree on an agenda.

In the first week of the First Committee, Brazil, Canada, Kenya, Mexico, New Zealand, and Sweden introduced a non-paper, with an explanatory note outlining elements of a draft resolution that would establish four open-ended Ad Hoc Committees on the four priority issues of the Five Ambassadors (A5) proposal for a programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). These Ad Hoc Committees would meet in Geneva with resources from within the regular CD budget, and be open to the 66 CD Member States as well as any interested UN Member State. (See Disarmament Machinery Report Week 1)

By the second week, they decided not to table the draft resolution. According to their joint statement, this innovative proposal that captured the imaginations of many governments and members of civil society, "would benefit from the opportunity to mature and for all delegations to gain a fuller understanding of what they entail." However, pressure from the United States, who circulated a memo denouncing the initiative to Member States' capitals, was also a major factor. (See Disarmament Machinery Report Week 2)

Although it was not introduced, the initiative did have several positive impacts. First, it put the CD on notice that if it cannot agree on a program of work the First Committee is willing to step in and initiate discussions following the broadly supported program of work developed by the Five Ambassadors for the CD. Second, it reignited discussions on the relationship between and among different pieces of international disarmament machinery. Third, it got Member States and civil society thinking creatively about how to work together to address the current impasse in the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The next three CD Presidents, Poland, the Republic of Korea and Romania have indicated their intention to work together to sustain a structured discussion of the core issues in the CD. Many Member States support creating continuity in the CD presidency through dialogue and consultations. Poland, the incoming CD President, "believe[s] that the establishment of a common platform of cooperation between the sessions' Presidents can advance us closer towards a long await-

ed progress on substantive issues." Poland is conducting consultations during the First Committee on the program of work, along with current CD President Peru.

Despite the controversy surrounding the Conference on Disarmament's impasse and efforts to solve it, the "Report of the Conference on Disarmament" (A/C.1/60/L.20) was also adopted without a vote and without discussion.

The First Committee finally took action on the draft resolution on the Disarmament Commission (DC) (A/C.1/60/L.59Rev1) during the final session on November 1. When Sierra Leone introduced the resolution the day prior and brought the Committee's attention to new operative paragraph five (OP 5), "replacing the previous paragraphs and all the square brackets in the original draft." This new paragraph does not recommend the two agenda items agreed on but not endorsed at the DC Organizational Meeting this summer, and instead "recommends that the Commission intensify consultations... with a view to reaching agreement before the start of its substantive session in 2006." (emphasis added)

This formulation of the draft resolution was supposed to be a compromise that would achieve a consensus adoption of the resolution. Sierra Leone made extensive connections between this resolution and the resolution on the Conference on Disarmament, which was adopted by consensus. Unfortunately, although removing the endorsement of the agenda from the resolution was presumably aimed at the only Disarmament Commission member to reject the agenda this summer, that delegation, the United States, announced before the vote that it would not participate in the vote. The resolution was then adopted without a vote. Canada lamented that the First Committee missed the opportunity to use its ability to vote to endorse the near-consensus agenda for the Disarmament Commission. A vote would have also exposed the United States as the lone Member State standing in the way of proceeding with work.

The Disarmament Commission, a deliberative body that operates by consensus, has been unable to agree on an agenda for three years. Although the body operates by consensus, it is not formally required to do so. Mexico, who only accepted the draft resolution's compromise text because it refers to the DC agreeing on an agenda before its next substantive session, resolved that if the DC does not agree on an agenda beforehand "the DC will adopt a decision on the first day, if necessary on the basis of a vote."

During the thematic debate, Canada suggested the DC, while awaiting an agenda, "do a stocktaking of what has been achieved and what remains to be done in realizing the goals

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First Committee Revitalization

At the final session of the First Committee, delegates continued the conversation on First Committee revitalization and reform (See Week 3 Report). First Committee reform issues came up during the formal session's discussion of a program of work for next year and continued when the Chair suspended the formal session for an informal discussion of revitalization issues. The main reform topics were agenda, general debate and thematic debate, in addition to early issues of civil society participation and resolutions.

Delegations agreed on the utility of the achievements of last year's First Committee Chair, Ambassador De Alba of Mexico, and universally commended the work and continuation of those achievements by this year's Chairman, Ambassador Choi of the Republic of Korea. In discussing the program of work for next year, Member States were concerned about the general debate's length, rolling list and general utility. Every speaker supported keeping the general debate confined to one week, but Egypt, Cuba, Armenia and Jordan were concerned that the number of sessions not dip below seven, as they had just been cut down from ten. Due to room-sharing constraints however, this required the seven sessions to spill over into the second week, which disappointed The Netherlands. It was agreed that the First Committee would return to the practice of confining the general debate to one week the following year.

Within the discussion on the length of the general debate, Uganda proposed that long statements be transmitted to delegations electronically to give more time for interactive discussion. This year, delegations were urged to limit their speeches, but the Chair, in what Sri Lanka called a "flexible and gracious manner," did not cut off the more long-winded speeches.

In order to use time more effectively, many of the delegations advocated making true use of the rolling list of speakers, as this year "some days we had to close up shop just because we had no speakers," as The Netherlands pointed out. However, the practice has been that delegations request to speak on certain days, and even if the speakers list is exhausted, most delegations scheduled to speak the following day are unprepared to speak at the end of the session a day early. Armenia pointed out that many delegations try to speak on the last days of the session, and Mexico urged that last year's decision to use the rolling list "needs to be applied strictly."

During this discussion, delegations differed in their evaluation of the general debate's utility. Some delegations, like Cuba, Egypt and Armenia, valued the general debate highly, particularly because "in practice, smaller delegations can

only participate in the general debate" as the thematic debate is held at the same time as resolution consultations, according to Cuba. Uganda, on the other hand, said that as a smaller delegation, "less general debate would be easier for small delegations that have to hop from committee to committee." Chile had a low opinion of the general debate's "liturgical rigidity, its repetitiousness, and its long tedious statements," and preferred to move to interactive discussions sooner, a sentiment it presented in its brief general debate statement.

Delegations all praised the thematic debate this year, which Mexico called "useful and fresh", and Argentina called "very useful". These debates could continue to be improved by giving delegations more notice of the speakers' identities to facilitate appropriate preparation, and by delegations gaining practice at interactive discussions. Although Mexico did suggest possibly breaking "the rigid separation between debate and decision making" by adopting resolutions that are 'already mature' during thematic debate, Armenia said it would be "virtually impossible" for small delegations to take action at the same time as the thematic debate because smaller delegations are often in consultations. The Chair informed the Committee that it could not make decisions in Conference Room 4 unless they are without a vote, because Conference Room 4 does not have a voting machine. As this would be very difficult to separate out, the suggestion was "too complicated for now."

The session also included an informal discussion of revitalization regarding the organization of the agenda and the new use of the seven clusters. These were first proposed last year in Ambassador De Alba's letter to the President of the 59th Session of the General Assembly and have since been used to cluster the thematic debate and the action on resolutions. Most delegations felt they were a useful ordering device for voting and thematic work, and two proposals for their continued work were presented: one from the Chair, and another from Argentina, one of the Vice-Chairs.

The proposal from the chair created a bridge between the formalized agenda items and the informal clusters by putting the number of the cluster at the end of each of the agenda items. Intended to establish a clearer link between the two ordering mechanisms, it was not agreed to because a few delegations indicated they would not be in a position to link the formal and the informal practices.

The proposal from Argentina ascribed the seven clusters into the General Assembly agenda, with the current items becoming sub-items under the clusters. Some delegations indicated this was a complicated proposal, and though they appreciated Argentina's constructive suggestions, changing the

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Disarmament Education

On Friday, October 21, the First Committee heard presentations from and engaged in interactive discussion with NGOs on Disarmament Education. Dr. Kathleen Sullivan and Dr. Peter Lucas, both disarmament educators, gave presentations about education work on nuclear weapons and small arms and light weapons, respectively. During her presentation, Dr. Sullivan demonstrated one of the interactive exercises or 'thought experiments' she uses in the classroom; one of the most engaging and heart-opening demonstrations the First Committee has experienced in a long time. Dr. Sullivan first requested the delegates to use their imaginations "by listening to two sounds, which will help us understand the fire-power of the world's nuclear arsenal," quoting Albert Einstein that "Imagination is more important than knowledge."

She dropped a single BB into a tin to represent the total fire-power of all the weapons used in World War II. "That is all bullets, bombs, grenades and landmines; all the torpedoes and conventional bombs; and the two new, nuclear weapons used on Japan." Dr. Sullivan then asked for quiet so the First Committee could listen to the sound that represents all the nuclear weapons that exist in the world today, 60 years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and poured 2,667 BBs into the tin, creating a crackling explosive sound that went on for several minutes. Some of the diplomats even closed their eyes. After a moment of silence, Dr. Sullivan reminded the Committee, "That sound represents the reality we all live with. 2,667 World War II's is equivalent to today's nuclear arsenal - approximately 31,000 nuclear weapons. And it is important to know the facts, to 'combat ignorance, complacency and a culture of violence' as the Secretary General stated in the forward to the UN Study."

The UN Expert Group on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education, convened by Ambassador Miguel Marín-Bosch of Mexico, was authorised by UN Resolution A/RES/55/33E of the General Assembly in November 2000. It was the passion and commitment of Ambassador Marín-Bosch and support of Mexico that initiated the two-year study. During that time there was a great deal of interaction between the Expert Group, NGOs, educators, as well as members of the UN family of organizations, including the IAEA, CTBTO, UNIDIR, UNESCO, and others, and not least the pivotal role played by the DDA as the Secretariat of the study.

In October 2002, after two years of work by the Expert Group, the report from the Study was launched, and the General Assembly adopted its 34 recommendations without a vote. When the study was launched, Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated that "Disarmament education seeks to

inform and empower citizens to work with their Governments for positive change. I hope that Governments, the United Nations family, ... non-governmental organisations and others ... will do their part to sustain the process of consultation and co-operation started by the Group of Experts, so that disarmament and non-proliferation education becomes an integral - and natural - part of the education of the next generation." (<http://disarmament2.un.org>).

Member States play an essential role in implementing this hope. There are many recommendations that are specific to Member States and require their support in the training of not only the next generation but of current diplomats, parliamentarians, peacekeepers and military personnel. As the Study indicates, there is a need to "expand and improve disarmament and non proliferation education and training in order to promote disarmament and non proliferation" (VIII OP43). That means to incorporate not only education about disarmament, but education for disarmament. Also, the study notes that "in order for the Department for Disarmament Affairs to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations of this study, the General Assembly is encouraged to allocate adequate human and financial resources to the task."

There are specific recommendations that Member States work with NGOs and civil society, and provide financial support for disarmament education initiatives. This year's Draft Resolution A/C.1/60/L.28, encourages Member States to "undertake concrete activities to implement" the recommendations of the Study. Several states have contributed reports on disarmament education activities, and others have collaborated with NGOs to develop new curricula, particularly regarding small arms disarmament. Canada, for instance, "supports [the] efforts of Reaching Critical Will to ensure wide public access to national statements and other documents emanating from meetings of UN disarmament bodies." The DDA is developing disarmament curricula which will be posted on the UN's Cyberschoolbus website.

While it is heartening to see that this item is again on the agenda of the First Committee, it is tragic to see that the words that have been put forth year after year are not being followed with action- specifically with a full-fledged commitment to provide disarmament education with all the material and human resources that this noble, indeed, necessary cause requires. For with every dollar transferred from military expenditures to the cause of disarmament education future generations may indeed be saved from the "scourge of war".

There are many ways to make the process of disarmament education "integral" to the education of not only young peo-

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Verification, Compliance and Transparency

Competing visions of verification, compliance, and transparency faced off in the last two days of First Committee, with draft resolutions L.1/Rev.1*, L.38/Rev.2, and L.50/Rev.1 all adopted by recorded vote. The US draft "Compliance with non-proliferation, arms limitation and disarmament agreements" (A/C.1/60/L.1/Rev.1*) was adopted with a vote of 137-0-11. The abstentions came from Barbados, Belarus, Cuba, Egypt, Grenada, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Russian Federation, South Africa, and Venezuela. Iran's controversial draft "Follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed in the 1995 and 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons" (A/C.1/60/L.38/Rev.2) was adopted by a much narrower margin, with a vote of 70-52-22. Finally, "Transparency in armaments" (A/C.1/60/L.50/Rev.1) was adopted with a vote of 122-0-21.

The three resolutions reveal the deep polarization in the international community's understanding of compliance and verification, not only in what constitutes verification, but also in what parties are complying with. L.1/Rev.1* and L.38/Rev.2 delineate the polarized perspectives over these issues. All but one of the 11 states who abstained from L.1/Rev.1* voted in favor of L.38/Rev.2, and 74 of the states who voted in favor of L.1/Rev.1* abstained from or rejected L.38/Rev.2 (including all Member States of the EU and NATO). A comparison of the two texts depicts the political grandstanding present in both of them and between the states that introduced them.

The final draft of L.1/Rev.1* included several significant revisions and new co-sponsors after the US received an abundance of amendments to its original draft. It eased off hard-line demands for compliance enforcement, and drew the UN and other multilateral venues back into its compliance framework. For example, the call for compliance enforcement in preambular paragraph five was removed during revision. Likewise, where L.1 called for "concerted action to ensure that all States comply with their existing arms limitations, non-proliferation and disarmament agreements and to hold those not in compliance with such agreements accountable for their non-compliance," L.1/Rev.1* "calls upon all Member States to take concerted action in a manner consistent with relevant international law to encourage, through bilateral and multilateral means, the compliance by all States . . . and to hold those not in compliance with such agreements accountable for their non-compliance in a manner consistent with the Charter of the United Nations."

L.1/Rev.1* is still not as committed to international law and multilateral fora as its predecessors were. While preambular paragraph seven, "Noting that verification and compliance,

and enforcement in a manner consistent with the Charter, are integrally related," was added, the resolution still does not give the highest recognition to the UN Charter or international law in issues of compliance and verification. This is a rapid change from the 2003 verification resolution, A/RES/57/86. 57/86 was not only "convinced that observance by Member States of the Charter of the United Nations, treaties to which they are parties and other sources of international law is important for the strengthening of international security," but also recognized, "the resolving of compliance concerns effectively by means consistent with such agreements and international law can, inter alia, contribute to better relations among States and the strengthening of world peace and stability." China, Cuba, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Russian Federation, and Venezuela believe that L.1/Rev.1* has lost its objectivity and balance from previous years' versions, and lament the departure from the spirit and content of resolutions 57/86 and its predecessor, A/RES/52/30.

The increasing role for international law in the final draft of L.1/Rev.1* still does not address the United States' assertion in its introduction for L.1 that noncompliance should be judged by whatever methods it deems appropriate and viable. L.1/Rev.1* does not explain the requirements or methods for judging the degree of verifiability of a treaty or of the compliance of a State with that treaty.

For example, there is no indication that the US is retracting its belief that "international data declarations, international cooperative measures (including technical measures) and on-site inspection regimes by themselves will [NOT] be sufficient for detecting noncompliance." The IAEA has reportedly "initiated intensive verification efforts in a number of countries and investigated the illicit procurement network . . . [and] strengthened the verification system through enhanced use of satellite imagery, environmental sampling and a variety of new technologies."¹ The US has made it clear it believes these measures are insufficient but has only proposed subjective alternatives. Iran pointed out that the clear lack of trust in "competent multilateral organizations" and the dissatisfaction of the United States with technical means of verification leaves room for entirely subjective judgments of compliance. Complicating matters, the US will not become party to any treaty deemed to be not "effectively verifiable." (See Verification Report, Week 3)

Many states expressed concern with the lack of clarity surrounding OP.4, which calls for concerted action. Cuba, Indonesia, Iran, and the Russian Federation all remarked that the lack of clearly defined parameters and the ambiguous language raises doubts about the true design of the resolu-

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Verification, Continued

tion. The Russian Federation argued that L.1/Rev.1* "abounds with provisions that give grounds for arbitrary interpretations . . . not necessarily associated with the goals of non-proliferation and disarmament."

The debate over L.38/Rev.2 proved more contentious. In the days prior to the vote, groups across the political spectrum hoped this "politically misguided initiative" would be withdrawn. As Rebecca Johnson, Acronym Institute, noted, Iran took advantage of the structure of the First Committee, which "makes it difficult to defeat any resolution that gestures sufficiently towards past agreements, the rhetoric of a moral high ground (however spurious) or even the blandly meaningless." L.38/Rev.2 is framed in the language and content of many previous resolutions sponsored by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and follows the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, making it difficult for the supporters of these agreements to vote against it. (For textual analysis and NAM reactions, see Nuclear Disarmament Final and Week 4 Reports)

The US and the EU declared that the text should be judged in the context of its submission. Because Iran was found in non-compliance with its IAEA Safeguards Agreement, they voted against the Iranian resolution calling for compliance with the NPT. While presenting a strict approach to compliance enforcement in one resolution, the US rejected another calling on specific states to comply with their treaty obligations. In addition, as Egypt and Cuba pointed out, the chief author of L.1/Rev.1* maintains the world's largest nuclear arsenal though clearly obliged to take steps to reduce it. One cannot help but notice the double standard. (See Nuclear Disarmament Report)

Egypt, Cuba, and Iran are also politicizing these issues and concealing their true intentions behind the language of multilateralism, as demonstrated during the explanation of votes for L.50/Rev.1. In supporting the UN Conventional Arms Register (UNCAR), L.50/Rev.1 confronts compliance and verification through a major multilateral weapons transparency mechanism. While UNCAR is voluntary, it builds confidence towards legally-binding agreements; voluntary transparency is "verification-lite". As one delegation pointed out, significant, serious, voluntary submission of information by some states is good leverage for demanding transparency from others.

In its remarks about L.50/Rev.1, following an earlier statement that verification machinery is designed to enhance cooperation among states, Cuba declared that "transparency is important for a climate of trust," and should lead to the protection of national, regional, and international security.

Cuba, however, abstained from L.50/Rev.1, as did Egypt and Iran. Their reservation was that UNCAR is limited to conventional weapons. By excluding nuclear weapons, materials, and systems, UNCAR is qualitatively unbalanced. Egypt (speaking for the Arab League), Syrian Arab Republic, and Sudan all expressed concern at this, arguing that Israel has the most destructive weapons in the Middle East, and yet is not subjected to the same suspicion as Iran and Iraq, whose armaments are less qualitatively destructive.

Cuba, however, has never participated in UNCAR, and Egypt and Iran have not participated since 1992 and 1998, respectively. For all their talk about multilateralism, transparency, and comprehensiveness, none of the three main opponents of L.1/Rev.1* has been actively contributing to a major UN multilateral transparency mechanism. The art of double standards is not practiced by the US alone.

The issues of verification, compliance, and transparency remain vitally important for international peace, security, and stability. In the IAEA Annual Report to the General Assembly, Director General Mohamed ElBaradei argued that the world currently faces an "unprecedented array of challenges to the non-proliferation and arms control regime."² Clearly there is consensus on the need for effective verification and compliance mechanisms, but there is no consensus on what constitutes compliance and verification, which treaties are effectively verifiable, what are the most appropriate measures for confidence-building, nor even with what States need to comply.

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¹ Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, "Statement to the Sixtieth Regular Session of the United Nations General Assembly," Statements of the Director General (New York: IAEA.org, 31 October 2005)

<http://www.iaea.org/NewsCenter/Statements/2005/ebsp2005n015.html>

² Ibid.

Fissile Materials

Ten years after the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference committed States to commence negotiations on a fissile materials treaty (FMT), no such negotiations are underway in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Last year's General Assembly resolution (A/RES/59/81) calling for the CD to adopt a program of working including negotiations on an "effectively verifiable" FMT has been ignored. During the first week of the First Committee, two years after China's change of position, the world finally received an answer to the A5 (Five Ambassadors) proposal for a CD program of work from the state most often identified as blocking consensus on that proposal. The United States stated its support for a fissile materials cut-off negotiating mandate which is "unencumbered by linkages to unrelated proposals" - as it is under the A5 approach, where it is linked to discussions on PAROS, security assurances, and nuclear disarmament. The United States also reiterated that the mandate should not "refer to verification measures." However, this in itself should not be an obstacle to negotiations; other states have basically conceded that whether and how to verify can be addressed in negotiations.

As the U.S. insistence on delinkage is a stance very unlikely to garner acceptance from key states (China came a long way just to back the A5 proposal), it appears that prospects are dim for FMT negotiations in 2006. The issue was not directly tested in the First Committee this fall, as Canada did not offer a resolution on the FMT. Instead Canada was one of the co-sponsors of the initiative, eventually withdrawn, for establishment of ad hoc committees of the General Assembly based on the A5 proposal, one of which would have negotiated the FMT.

While fissile materials issues sometimes seem to induce a certain lethargy among NGOs and governments alike, in fact they go to the heart of disarmament and non-proliferation. Most obviously, a cut-off halts growth in arsenals. This point was illustrated sharply by Pakistan's rebuff during the General Debate of the U.S.-backed proposal for a formal moratorium pending agreement on an FMT, stating that it will only "halt fissile material production consistent with the requirements of its nuclear posture."

A verified FMT would also bring international monitoring of facilities in nuclear-armed states, generally advancing the framework for abolition and, not insignificantly, contributing to the capability to prevent diversion to terrorists and other non-state actors, notably in Russia and Pakistan.

Finally, depending on its provisions, an FMT could contribute directly to disarmament. For example, as South Africa has proposed, it could provide that materials declared surplus to military requirements would be subject to international monitoring. Indonesia's remarks during the General Debate illustrated that many states want a disarmament-oriented

Negative Security Assurances

Despite the increase in both the number and urgency of calls for a codified, legally binding instrument to assure Non-Nuclear Weapon States that they will not be threatened with or suffer an attack by nuclear weapons, Negative Security Assurances (NSAs) remain an elusive and contested subject in the disarmament and non-proliferation arena. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and its Member States have been calling for legally binding NSAs for an extended period of time and have been quite vocal throughout the First Committee meetings this year. In his opening statement to the First Committee, Ambassador Rezlan Ishar Jenie of Indonesia stated: "NAM also reaffirms that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, pending the total elimination of such weapons, efforts for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally-binding instrument on security assurances to Non-Nuclear Weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority."

As Chair of the NAM disarmament working group, Indonesia has also taken the lead on sponsoring a number of resolutions calling for strengthening of multilateralism in general and legally binding NSAs in particular. This year's resolution on NSAs, "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/L.45) was adopted in the First Committee with 98 in favor, zero against and 55 delegations abstaining. Although most Nuclear Weapon States believe that existing NSAs as given through Security Council resolutions 255 and 984 remain sufficient, China has lent support to the calls for legally binding NSAs and was the only Nuclear Weapon State to vote in favor of resolution L.45.

Although they expressed support for legally binding NSAs, both China and the Republic of Korea also encouraged their colleagues to look for more innovative methods of engaging in international dialogue surrounding disarmament and non-proliferation before turning to discussion of a legally binding instrument. China's Ambassador Zhang Yan, noted that governments are not doing enough to eradicate fear and distrust in the international community. Ambassador Zhang stated: "Countries should respect each other's security interests and strive for a relationship based on mutual trust, mutual benefits, equality and cooperation so as to realize mutual security, thus eradicating the motivations behind proliferation." While innovation and the courage to maintain a vision of a world free from war are hard to come by in a global environment where powerful political actors value destruction and war rather than development, humanity, peace, health, and human rights, it is imperative that countries, supported by NGOs and civil society, strive to amass the necessary political will to achieve mutual trust and equality among states so that one day the increasing need for NSAs will be diminished and eventually completely eradicated.

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-Jenna Crouch, Reaching Critical Will



Disarmament and Development

The 60th Session of the First Committee began with calls for decreasing alarmingly high worldwide military expenditures, reallocating resources to development, increasing development and security through disarmament and fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals and Article 26 of the UN Charter. These appeals manifested in draft resolutions A/C.1/60/L.16, "Relationship between Disarmament and Development", A/C.1/60/L.34, "Addressing the Humanitarian and Development impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons" and A/C.1/60/L.21, "UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean".

Draft Resolution A/C.1/60/L.16 was adopted with a 164-1-2 vote. The United States voted against and France and Israel abstained, which reflects the same voting pattern as last year's resolution A/RES/59/78. L.16 does not differ from last year's resolution, and continues to stress "the importance of the symbiotic relationship between disarmament and development and the important role of security in this connection" and calls for the "part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development".

The United Kingdom supported mainstreaming development policy, but asserted that there was no automatic link between disarmament and development. The United States claimed disarmament and development are distinct issues that are not linked, despite the World Summit declaration from heads of state, including the US President, that they are fundamentally linked.

"UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean" (A/C.1/60/L.21) highlights the "important role that the [Regional Centre] can play in promoting confidence-building measures, arms control and limitations, disarmament and development at a regional level", and was adopted by the First Committee without vote.

Draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.34 says that "the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation have a wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences and pose a serious threat to peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability and sustainable development". L.34 was adopted on in an almost unanimous vote of 160-1, with no abstentions. Jordan commented that determining the influence of small arms and light weapons, especially in post conflict areas, is of extreme importance for the security, development and cooperation of those areas. The United States, as the only vote against, did not wish to link SALW with their humanitarian and socio-economic consequences.

The debates, votes and resolutions of the 60th session of the

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Nuclear Weapon Free Zones

In 1975, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution defining Nuclear Weapon Free Zones as, "any zone recognized as such by the General Assembly, which is established by a group of States freely exercising their sovereign rights and by means of an International Treaty or a Convention."

The NWFZ already in force were repeatedly mentioned in the 2005 First Committee. Myanmar spoke on behalf of ASEAN, requesting that the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) sign the protocol to the 1997 Treaty of Bangkok as soon as possible. The NWFZ in the South Pacific established through the 1986 Treaty of Rarotonga was mentioned in the general debate, with Pacific states expressing their satisfaction in the regional confidence it has helped to promote. The first NWFZ in Latin America and the Caribbean entered into force in 1968 (Treaty of Tlatelolco). A convention of all states party to a NWFZ was held in Mexico this summer, and received significant praise from many delegations in the First Committee.

The NWFZ in Africa (Treaty of Palindaba, ready for signature in 1996) has not yet entered into force. Many states have already ratified the Treaty while others are waiting for the instruments to be submitted by the relevant national legislatures. African nations and nations from other regions have expressed strong support for the African NWFZ. Many African nations called for their neighbors to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible so it may enter into force. Similarly, the Central Asian NWFZ is strongly supported by the states of the region (Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan), although France, the UK and the US have expressed doubts in regard to the language of the treaty, while Russian and China have been more supportive. France, the UK and the US are hesitant to give negative security assurances to states under the Russian nuclear umbrella.

Seven resolutions or decisions were tabled which pertain directly to NWFZs. Several items were presented involving either regional disarmament work or nuclear disarmament, all of which pertain to NWFZs (see Nuclear Disarmament Report). The NWFZ resolutions included: L.3 (Middle East NWFZ), L.6 (Risk of Nuclear Proliferation in the Middle East), L.7 (NWFZ in Central Asia), L.8 (NWFZ in Africa), L.12 (NWF Southern Hemisphere), and L.25 (Consolidation of NWFZ in Latin America). Of these decisions, L.3, L.7, L.8, and L.25 were adopted without a vote. L.19 (The Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace) does not directly mention NWFZs, but a zone of general peace.

Beginning with L.19, Pakistan, India, China, and 118 other states voted for the resolution, opposed by France, the UK and the US as a group, with 44 abstentions.

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Missiles

The area of missiles continues to be plagued with diverging views regarding venue (be it the UN, the Missile Technology Control Regime or the Hague Code Of Conduct) and scope. As Pakistan said in its Explanation of Vote on A/C.1/60/L.22, proposals continue to lack consensus, and often the sponsors seem more interested in getting resolutions adopted than in furthering their goals. All resolutions this session were put to a vote, and received no votes as well as abstentions.

A few countries addressed missiles in their general statements during the first week of the First Committee. Norway urged more countries to sign up to the HCOC. On behalf of the ASEAN member states, Myanmar urged "multilaterally negotiated, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements" on missiles, which was verbatim from its comments in 2004. During the thematic debate in week two, China mentioned that it was "willing to join the Missile Technology Control Regime."

A draft decision (A/C.1/60/L.5), submitted by Egypt, Indonesia, and Iran, "decides to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-first session the item entitled 'Missiles.'" The same countries sponsored last year's resolution (A/RES/59/67) that requested the Secretary-General first, to submit a report in 2006 identifying areas where consensus can be reached, and second, with the assistance of a third Panel of Governmental Experts to be convened in 2007, to prepare an additional report on missiles to be submitted in 2008.

L.5 resulted in a vote of 101 in favor, 2 against (United States and Israel), and 50 abstentions. These results were close to Egypt, Indonesia and Iran's resolution A/RES/59/67 from last year (see Missiles, week two), which passed with 98 in favor, 2 against, and 60 abstentions.

"The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation" (A/C.1/60/L.22), introduced by the Philippines and sponsored by 108 Member States, encountered similar resistance this year as last. Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, and Malaysia submitted resolution A/C.1/60/L.62* with the same three amendments to L.22 submitted and rejected last year. The voting results of L.22 were 151 in favor, 1 opposed (Iran) and 11 abstentions, winning slightly more support than last year (A/C.1/59/L.50 received 137 in favor, 2 opposed (Iran and Egypt), and 16 abstentions). All three amendments in L.62* were rejected as follows:

Amendment 1, in the eighth preambular paragraph, "[a]dd the words 'development and' before the word 'proliferation'" with oral amendment of adding "in a comprehensive manner" at the end of the paragraph, was rejected by 26 in favor, 105 against, and 7 abstentions;

Amendment 2, in operative paragraph 1, "[add] the word 'first' before the word 'practical'" was rejected by 19 in favor, 108 against, and 10 abstentions; and

Amendment 3, in operative paragraph 3, "[r]eplace the words 'Encourages the exploration of' with the words 'Encourages the United Nations to explore'" was rejected by 24 in favor, 106 no, and 7 abstentions.

Egypt, the Philippines, Chile, Algeria, Cuba, China, Iran, India, Indonesia and Syria explained their votes on L.22 and L.62* (see Missiles, week 4). Points raised against L.22 included that it focused solely on ballistic missiles; that the UN is the proper forum for dealing with missiles issues; that the HCOC has serious shortcomings in addressing peaceful uses; that attention was not paid to the vertical proliferation of missiles including design, development, testing and deployment; that the HCOC's development lacked transparency and that L.22 was not legally binding.

Iran, the only State to vote against L.22, said in its explanation of vote (EoV) that it was forced to vote against it because the sponsors were not willing to develop or change the text to give room to non-subscribing HCOC states. Because the HCOC was developed outside of the UN, engagement of all States is now necessary and asking States to agree on the text on a take it or leave it basis is unfair.

The Philippines and Chile, the current and former chairs of the HCOC, respectively, both voted against L.62* but advised that the amendments, although they can not be considered now, should be brought to the next HCOC plenary meeting.

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Fissile Materials, Continued

treaty, calling for "negotiations without conditions on a verifiable fissile materials cut-off treaty (FMCT), focusing attention both on existing stocks and future production of weapons-usable material - whether civil or military."

For a comprehensive inventory of all nuclear materials, see Reaching Critical Will's Model Nuclear Inventory: Accountability is Democracy, Transparency is Security.

-John Burroughs and Michael Spies, Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy
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Nuclear Disarmament, Continued

The First Committee approved the resolution in a relatively close vote, 70 to 52, with 22 abstentions. Afterwards, in a harsh explanation of its negative vote, the United States said the resolution shrouded proliferation under the false issue of the pace of nuclear disarmament. In contrast, South Africa's representative said she considered resolutions based on their merit and consistency with her country's national policy; the origin of the resolution did not determine support. Sri Lanka said it voted for the resolution but regretted its lack of balance between the obligations of disarmament and non-proliferation.

A separate vote was held on a preambular paragraph reaffirming the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. The day of the vote, Iran orally amended the paragraph to add a characterization of the 1995 resolution as reaffirming the importance of early realization of universal adherence to the NPT and placement of nuclear facilities under full-scale IAEA safeguards - i.e., Israel should join the NPT as a Non-Nuclear Weapon State. The 1995 document did do this, but in the context of calling for creation of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and supporting the Middle Eastern peace process. In a vote that came down to the last few cast, causing murmurs in the hall, the paragraph was approved by 58 to 54, with 23 abstentions. Apparently the fact that Iran's draft does not call for compliance with existing safeguards obligations, the selective characterization of the 1995 resolution, and the late amendment amplified the opposition based on the resolution as a whole. Again, here Iran was potentially undermining the force of a commitment that many states, and certainly Arab states, consider integral to the 1995 extension of the NPT. Egypt's representative said that he was shocked and extremely disappointed at the vote; while the language of the paragraph was not perfect, it was recalling a main pillar of the NPT's indefinite extension.

-John Burroughs, Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy

Disarmament Education, Continued

ple, but to the whole community of humanity. Teaching people about disarmament and non-proliferation, and letting them know that there is a choice other than violence to resolve conflict, is one step along the path called Permanent Peace.

See <http://disarmament.un.org/education/study.html> for full list of recommendations.

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Disarmament Machinery, Continued

set out by UN SSODI, and where goals might be revised" in order to facilitate agreement on convening an SSODIV.

Several Member States indicated that reviewing the mandates and the procedures of the disarmament machinery would require going back to the institution that created them. Convening a Fourth Special Session on Disarmament (SSODIV) could be used to take stock of the goals set out for the DC and CD in SSOD I. Indonesia, which calls an SSOD IV "the only viable alternative to our collective efforts", submitted a draft decision, A/C.1/60/L.17, to include "Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament" (SSOD IV) in the agenda for its 61st Session, which was adopted without a vote and without discussion.

Many members of the Non-Aligned Movement have increasingly advocated for an SSOD IV, particularly since the CD and DC, created by the First SSOD in 1978, have been deadlocked for several years. According to China, "Only SSOD and its preparation process can provide UN Member States with the opportunities to...reach new consensus on adjustment to multilateral mechanisms," and although Italy approaches calls for suspension of the multilateral disarmament fora "with caution," it does "not exclude the option of reviewing the functioning of the existing machinery...follow[ing] the appropriate institutional processes."

Even if we are disappointed that the new initiative was not tabled this year, much has been done and there is much to do in revitalizing our disarmament machinery. And, as Kenya said, we "anticipate its re-introduction in a more potent form next time if the Conference on Disarmament does not awaken."

-Jennifer Nordstrom, Reaching Critical Will
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Disarmament and Development, Cont.

First Committee show a continued commitment to promoting development and security through disarmament. Member nations cited the surge in military expenditures as increasing the urgency of reallocating resources to development, established the link between small arms and light weapons and their humanitarian and socio-economic consequences and called for a fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals and Article 26 of the UN Charter which calls upon member nations "to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources".

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Biological and Chemical Weapons

While there weren't many groundbreaking changes during the past year in the field of chemical and biological disarmament, to date, the overall steady progress of the implementation of both the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions has been a success in the disarmament arena as well as an important example for the disarmament and non-proliferation of other types of weapons. During the second week of First Committee meetings, in the Thematic Debate on "Other Weapons of Mass Destruction" and PAROS many government delegations recognized the importance of the progress already made in terms of chemical and biological disarmament, but also stressed the need for continued progress in these critical areas as a basis for general and complete disarmament. Speaking on October 12 on behalf of the European Union, Ambassador John Freeman from the United Kingdom stressed the importance of the BWC and CWC as the basis for progress in other areas of disarmament and non-proliferation. He stated: "These Treaties have an essential role in countering the threat of chemical and biological weapons, and together with other key multilateral agreements provide a basis for the international community's disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, which contribute to international confidence, stability, and peace, including the fight against terrorism."

Other key issues raised throughout First Committee discussions of biological and chemical weapons included the need to find a balance between developing new technologies to improve the quality of human life and the prevention of using these technological advances to promote discrimination, war, and destruction. In addition, both Russia and Cuba called upon governments to provide financial assistance for carrying out the destruction of biological and chemical weapons in accordance with the national implementation measures of the BWC and CWC. Cuba also stated that along with monetary support for implementation of the BWC and CWC, the UN should encourage the development for appropriate mechanisms for promoting socio-economic growth in developing countries.

This year's resolutions on the implementation of the BWC and CWC, introduced and sponsored by Hungary and Poland respectively were, as in previous years, both adopted without a vote in the First Committee. There were no major changes to the text of either of the resolutions; however, minor changes include greater emphasis on implementation of national legislation under the CWC and calls for financial support from the Secretary General for the 2006 BWC review conference to be held in Geneva in 2006.

Looking forward to the BWC review conference in 2006, many governments stressed the need for a verification instru-

ment for the BWC, similar to that of the CWC, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Summarizing the concerns of many government delegations, on October 5, Ambassador Deborah Panckhurst of New Zealand stated: "the Biological Weapons Convention still lacks any verification mechanism. This remains a major hole in multilateral defenses at a time when biological weapons have been identified as a growing threat. We hope that the BWC Review Conference next year will provide an opportunity to consider how to address this issue." With the substantive progress already made in implementing the CWC, and the calls for support for verification and transparency in the field of biological disarmament, governments should take full advantage of the 2006 BWC review conference to make these goals a reality.

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First Committee Revitalization, Cont.

agenda items, which could have other implications, would require more discussion and consultation with capitols.

In previous weeks, First Committee reform has included civil society participation and resolutions (See Week 3). This First Committee witnessed the first NGO presentation ever, on Friday, October 21. (See Disarmament Education Report, Week 3) A practice that has been in place for years in various other disarmament fora, including conferences on the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Small Arms and Light Weapons, this interaction was precedent-setting in the General Assembly, and created an important avenue for NGOs and governments to critically engage each other within the institution of the United Nations.

Other discussions of First Committee Reform included improved implementation and follow-up of resolutions (OP 6 of A/RES/59/95), as well as the merging of duplicitous resolutions and the bi- and tri-annualization of repetitive resolutions. The general feeling was that this should all be the responsibility of the co-sponsors. (See First Committee Revitalization Report, Week 3)

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Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

The majority of opinions expressed about the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in First Committee this session were enthusiastically supportive of its entry into force and its role in the non-proliferation and disarmament process. Brazil's statement in the first week set the tone for positive reflection on the Treaty's norm-setting standards: "The CTBT is intended to be a bulwark against both vertical and horizontal proliferation, by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons. It constitutes a crucial step towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons." The success of this Treaty, according to the Executive Secretary of its Secretariat, the Preparatory Commission of the CTBT Organization (CTBTO), is dependent on "two crucial factors: its universality and its verifiability."

Through statements and sponsorship of draft resolution "Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty" (A/C.1/60/L.26/Rev.1) many states and organizations offered their support for the implementation of the CTBT, the development of its verification regime, the International Monitoring System (IMS), and the current moratorium on nuclear testing. All but five states voted in favor of adopting L.26/Rev.1.

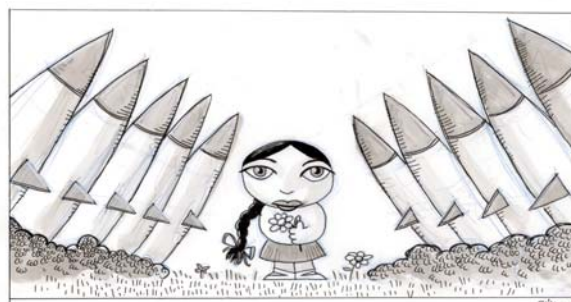
Despite this overwhelming vocal support for the CTBT, many states, including eleven of the Annex II states whose ratification is required for entry into force, have not signed and/or ratified the Treaty. While encouraging its entry into force, China, Columbia, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, and Pakistan possess nuclear technology and have not ratified the CTBT. In addition, two states expressly denounced the CTBT and the IMS. The United States, whose Senate voted against ratification of the CTBT in 1999, "does not support the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and will not become a party to that Treaty," according to their 2003 explanation of vote on the resolution. The Syrian Arab Republic believes the CTBT does not protect Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) from attack by Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) with nuclear weapons, does not universalize non-proliferation, and does not curb the development of new types of weapons. However, MERCOSUR expressed its belief (shared by many other delegations, including the EU and Brazil) that "the entry into force of the CTBT would free the world from nuclear tests, thus contributing to the systematic and progressive reduction in nuclear weapons and its elimination, as well as to the prevention and fight against nuclear proliferation."

One of Syria's other concerns touches upon a sensitive issue threading throughout many of the discussions at this year's session: bias in verification regimes and judgments of non-

compliance. Syria does not believe the verification regime of the CTBT would be impartial and fair, but rather that the data collected by the IMS could be used for political purposes by states seeking action against a particular sovereign nation. Meanwhile, the United States believes that the "goal of zero nuclear test explosions cannot be verified. The [CTBT's] critics argue that it is an agreement that would constrain the United States while allowing rogue governments to continue weapons development."¹ Upon introducing this year's resolution on verification and compliance, the United States' delegation stated that the U.S. does not sign agreements when it is not convinced other states will sign and/or comply with them, or when it feels the verification regime is inadequate to determine full compliance by other states. (See Verification and Compliance, Week Three) However, the IMS is widely considered to be a beneficial component of the CTBT, and two-thirds of its verification system had been built. Tibor Toth of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission believes the process of collecting, processing, analyzing, and transmitting incoming data to states for final analysis "empowers each Signatory State [regardless of size and wealth] to make their own judgment about events based on the data and products provided by the [CTBTO]."

Although Syria's belief that the CTBT benefits nuclear powers with hostile policies is at odds with the universalization of the CTBT, Syria is not an Annex II State whose ratification is required for entry-into-force. The US's opposition impedes the CTBT's final enter-into-force, because it is an Annex II States and because it is actively opposing the CTBT's entry-into-force. Most states understand the true benefits of the CTBT and its IMS: the humanitarian benefits for tsunami warning systems, the international cooperation benefits for enhancing transparency and eliminating doubts about compliance, and the legally-binding comprehensive ban on nuclear test explosions. Once again it is at the hands of a few states that progress in disarmament, peace, and security is impeded.

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Small Arms and Light Weapons

Calling Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) "the real weapons of mass destruction, causing higher death toll than caused by the atomic bombs in Japan," Bangladesh summarized the importance of Small Arms and Light Weapons during this First Committee. With 5 resolutions, and 3 of them new, there was significant movement in this area. The upcoming 5 year review conference on the Programme of Action in Summer of 2006 will perhaps allow for the momentum, however small, to be continued.

L.55: International instrument to identify and trace illicit SALW

While many praised the international instrument created by the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) to mark and trace SALW (introduced in resolution A/C.1/60/L.55), others felt that it did not go far enough. "It is regretful to note that after three sessions the Open-ended Working Group on Trading Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons has failed to conclude negotiations on a legally binding instrument," said Kazakhstan, and similar sentiments were echoed by Bangladesh, Colombia, Kazakhstan, The Republic of Korea, Trinidad and Tobago, Nigeria, India, UK and the EU, Austria, Uruguay and MERCOSUR, Mexico, Mali, Sierra Leone, Finland, Canada, Pacific Islands, Nigeria Albania and Ghana. The Republic of Korea, Norway, Colombia and Thailand also regretted the proposed marking and tracing instrument's omission of ammunition.

In a meeting of the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures, Interpol presented on their new Weapons Electronic Tracing System, which is (IWeTS) being used to "enhance both national and international criminal investigations in relation to the tracing of firearms" in the implementation of the "international instrument" discussed in L.55.

L.55 was adopted with a vote of 145 in favor, 0 against, and 25 abstentions (primarily from MERCOSUR and CARICOM). Their Explanations of Votes (EoVs) lamented the inability of the OEWG to create a legally binding instrument and include ammunition. The instrument was therefore not a stronger resolution than existing national and regional legislation.

L.37: Assistance to States for curbing illicit traffic in SALW Mozambique made a compelling statement regarding the need for its country to receive international aid and cooperation, which is in line with draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.37 of the same name, submitted again this year. L.37 calls on the international community to "provide technical and financial support to strengthen the capacity of civil society organizations to take action to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons." Introduced by Mali, Resolution L.37/Rev.1 was adopted by consensus on October 28, as it was last year and before that in 2003.

L.57: Illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects (omnibus resolution)

Japan, Colombia and South Africa submitted their annual resolution on SALW entitled "Illicit trade in small arms and

light weapons in all its aspects" (A/C.1/60/L.57) updated to reflect recent developments (see SALW week 1).

Member States and sponsors discussed the three amendments proposed by the EU, as in years past, which included: (1) emphasizing work on SALW transfer controls, (2) including suggested topics to be submitted to the preparatory committee "without prejudice to the eventual agenda for the Review Conference in 2006," and (3) using stronger language on the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts on developing an instrument on brokering. Once again, all were rejected in favor of keeping consensus on the resolution after certain states (China, Egypt, India, US, and some of the NAM states) threatened to vote against the resolution if needed. France raised frustrations at the limited space for debate and forward movement "if on the very first day we are presented with an unambitious text which we are told is the maximum we are able to achieve." Other changes from last year's resolution can be found in week 3.

The First Committee took action on L. 57* on October 26th. Usually adopted by consensus, Mexico called for a vote to be taken on L.57*. After some confusion (see SALW report, week 4), the vote on L.57* was split, and a separate vote was taken on operative paragraph 2 (OP2). Mexico and Jamaica abstained in the vote on OP2, citing their concern that the paragraph did not mention legally binding international agreements on marking and tracing, a concern expressed by many States. The resolution as a whole was adopted by consensus. Thus, though consensus was not broken on the resolution as a whole, a point was made that consensus should not be used to create lowest common denominator resolutions.

L.34: humanitarian and development impact of illicit trade in SALW

The Netherlands introduced a new "one-time" resolution entitled "Addressing the Humanitarian and Development Impact of the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons" (A/C.1/60/L.34). Linking disarmament and international security issues with human rights and development within the First Committee was a concern for some, though the resolution merely distills the recognition of this connection from the UN World Summit Outcome Document. "It is our duty to take into account this new consensus," The Netherlands said.

During the First Committee, The Netherlands held 5 discussions regarding draft resolution A/C.1/60/L.34. The final text, (L.34/Rev.1) reflects Member States' urging for increased emphasis on the link between SALW and development, while removing some references to human rights (see SALW week 3).

On October 28, resolution L.34/Rev.1 was adopted. Having hoped for a consensus adoption, lead sponsor The

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Conventional Weapons

Resolutions this year regarding conventional weapons were rather routine, and no new resolutions or changes in attitude fueled any debate. Five Resolutions were adopted, including L.35, L.44, L.48, L.49/Rev1, and L.58.

Early in the session, some States announced in their general statements that they had ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and/or its additional protocols. Norway stated, "The Norwegian Parliament has approved ratification of the ERW [Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons] protocol," and Sri Lanka "acceded to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons including its amended protocol II and amended protocols III and IV." Russia "ratified the Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons." Turkey "became party to the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention and its additional protocols I, II and IV as of March 2005."

"National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use technology" (A/C.1/60/L.35), sponsored by the Netherlands, was adopted without a vote, as it was in 2003 (A/RES/58/42). This resolution, which focuses on both conventional weapons and terrorism, invites members, "without prejudice to the provisions contained in Security Council resolution 1540...to enact or improve national legislation, regulations and procedures" to exercise control over the transfer of certain goods and technology, and to voluntarily report to the Secretary-General on these changes. In its Explanation of Vote (EoV), Cuba stressed again this year that systems of export controls based on discriminatory criteria will discriminate against states' import and export for peaceful purposes.

"Conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional levels" (A/C.1/60/L.44) received 147 votes in favor, 1 against (India), and 1 abstention (Bhutan). India and Bhutan were also the only votes against and abstentions last year. Belarus, Italy and Spain joined Bangladesh, Germany, Liberia, Nepal, Pakistan, Peru and the Ukraine as co-sponsors this year. India, understanding that the resolution is historically concerned with the dispute between India and Pakistan, explained again in its EoV that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) should not be concerned with regional agreements on arms control because its purpose is legal instruments of global application. Further, due to the current global characteristics of security, "the idea of preservation of a balance in defence capabilities in a regional or sub-regional context is both unrealistic and unacceptable."

Submitted by Sweden, the "Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons, Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to

Have Indiscriminate Effects" (A/C.1/60/L.48) was adopted again without a vote, as it has been for the past few years. The resolution calls upon states to become party to the aforementioned Convention.

A/C.1/60/L.49/Rev.1 on the "Prevention of the illicit transfer and unauthorized access to and use of man-portable air defence systems" was adopted without a vote on Friday, October 28. The resolution is very similar to last year's with some updates, including the acknowledgment of the role of unauthorized transfer of relevant materials and information, such as training and instruction materials, in assisting the illicit manufacture and transfer of MANPADS, and the exercise of control over "brokering" as well as access and transfer of MANPADS. It decided to "remain seized of the matter," and no further plans were put forth.

Resolution A/C.1/60/L.58 entitled "Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms" was adopted without a vote. With 71 co-sponsors, the resolution enjoyed a few more co-sponsors than last year with about one third of sponsors from last year replaced with new Member States. The resolution text is verbatim from last year's except for encouraging members to continue the dialogue on confidence-building measures rather than engage in it.

Thus, all resolutions adopted on conventional weapons this year had the same outcome as last year. There were no new resolutions and no states voted differently. Perhaps it is time for more ingenuity and risk on behalf of member states to introduce resolutions that progress worldwide aspirations in the area of conventional weapons.

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Landmines

Despite many failures in the disarmament field in the past few years, the First Committee's General Debate this week consistently noted the progress on landmines as a successful example of what can be accomplished when the international community cooperates. Norway called it "strong evidence of constructive multilateralism and that it is possible to work in innovative ways." The growing norm against anti-personnel landmines is a disarmament success story in which governments and civil society worked together.

The Ottawa Convention, or Mine Ban Treaty, is the international instrument to create a mine free world. It was signed by 122 countries in December 1997 and it became legally binding in March 1999. To date, 154 countries have signed the Treaty and 147 having ratified it. 48 State Parties have officially declared no stockpile of landmines and 62 States have completed the destruction of their stockpiles. Similar work is underway for most other States party to the Convention. The First Review Conference of this Convention was held in Nairobi, Kenya from November 29 to December 3, 2004 and produced what is known as the Nairobi Action Plan, and the second Review Conference will be held in Zagreb from November 28 to December 2.

Draft resolution "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction" (A/C.1/60/L.56) was presented by Austria. It urges countries that have not signed or ratified the Ottawa Convention to do so, implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan, support for mine victims, and participation in the upcoming Zagreb meeting to be held from November 28 to December 2.

The resolution was adopted with the following countries abstaining from the vote (with 147 votes in favor, none opposed and 15 abstained. All 15 abstentions, Cuba, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Myanmar, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, the United States and Viet Nam, are not States Parties to the Treaty.

China cast its first vote in favor of this resolution although it is still not party to the Convention.

In their explanations of vote, Cuba, India, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Republic of Korea stated that they supported the humanitarian aspect of the Convention but claimed the right of self-defense in defense of their continued use of landmines. Russia indicated that it intends to eventually join the Convention after it completes a review of its military options. Azerbaijan, Singapore, and Morocco, who are also not States Parties to the Treaty, voted in favor of the resolution but also claimed the right of self-defense for the continued use of landmines.

Small Arms & Light Weapons, Cont.

Netherlands was much aggrieved that the US requested a registered vote in which it was the only vote against, while 160 member States voted in favor and there were no abstentions. In its EoV, the Netherlands regretted that "one country has asked for a vote because it could not accept our approach."

According to its EoV, the US was concerned that the resolution linked efforts to prevent the spread of trade in illicit SALW with the humanitarian and socio-economic effects of SALW, which it believed should not be raised in the First Committee. It also felt that the resolution pre-empted planning for the Review Conference on the 2001 Programme of Action. Venezuela and Pakistan were concerned about ambiguous references to 'excessive' stockpiles without a clarification as to how this would be measured, but still voted in favor.

L40: Problems from accumulation of conv. ammunition in surplus
The new draft resolution "Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus" (A/C.1/60/L.40) was introduced in the context of a proposed international marking and tracing instrument that does not include ammunition. This followed the inclusion of this item in the provisional agenda of the 60th session (A/C.1/59/L.48). It "calls upon all interested states to determine the size of their surplus stockpiles of ammunition, explosive materials, and detonating devices if they represent a security risk and if external assistance is required to eliminate this risk," encourages States to assist other States, and asks States to develop measures to combat illicit trafficking of ammunition. Draft Resolution L.40*, introduced by France, was adopted without a vote on Monday, October 31 after a US-requested postponement of vote during which the United States apparently resolved some issue with the resolution.

Looking ahead

Member States struggled between achieving broad-based support of resolutions through consensus or being caught by the tyranny of the minority when consensus was used as a veto tool (See Disarmament Machinery Report, week 3). This conversation is likely to continue.

There was also much contention regarding the purpose of the 2006 review conference on the Programme of Action, and whether moving forward constitutes "re-opening the original PoA," or whether simply "reviewing" the PoA stagnates the process and allows only "backward looking" discussions. Areas of work for the upcoming PoA review conference and subsequent First Committee Sessions will likely address issues of illicit arms brokering, end-user certificates, and transfer controls.

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Regional Centres

Regional Centres have received a fair amount of attention during this session of the First Committee. During both the General and Thematic Debates, many delegations paid tribute to the Centres' contributions to development, peace, and security. Myanmar, on behalf of ASEAN, exemplified this attitude: "We wish to take this opportunity to express, once again, our appreciation to the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean and Africa for their effective contributions towards international peace and security. Regional Seminars and Forums, which were organized by those Centres, effectively contribute to the progress of ongoing security and disarmament process in respective regions."

A full meeting was devoted to Regional Centres during the thematic debate. Under Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs Nobuyasu Abe, and by Agnes Marcaillou, Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Department of Disarmament Affairs, gave presentations stressing the need for cooperation between the UN and Regional Centres, which has been mandated by the General Assembly. Both also pointed out the financial difficulties the Centres are experiencing. As Under Secretary-General Abe explained, "past experience has led the Department for Disarmament Affairs to understand that donors are ready to make financial contributions in support of projects and activities, but many are unable to provide the same support for the operating costs of the Centres. The lack of core funding for the operating costs of the Centres has thus become a persistent challenge for the Centres to ensure their financial viability and to fulfill their mandates in the regions."

The First Committee took action on four resolutions concerning Regional Centres this session. They all reaffirm the importance of the Centres and their contributions to peace and disarmament, and ask both Member States and the Secretary-General to provide financial assistance.

"United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament" (A/C.1/60/L.18) was adopted with 121 votes in favor, 3 opposed, and 44 abstained from the vote. It calls for education programmes that "are aimed at changing basic attitudes with respect to peace and security and disarmament so as to support the achievement of the purposes and principles of the United Nations."

"United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean" (A/C.1/60/L.21) was adopted without a vote. It recalls the relationship between disarmament and development, recognizes the contribution of the Regional Centre to strengthening the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, and invites further participation

by all states in the region in the Centres activities. The Regional Center for Latin America and the Caribbean has been established the longest and is relatively financially stable.

"United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific" (A/C.1/60/L.32/Rev.1) asks the Secretary-General to ensure its operation from Kathmandu. This resolution was adopted without a vote.

Finally, "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa" (A/C.1/60/L.41) recalls the "important role that the Regional Centre can play in promoting confidence-building and arms-limitation measures at the regional level, thereby promoting progress in the area of sustainable development." It was adopted without a vote.

Although these resolutions support the regional centres, that does not guarantee their implementation, and the future of the centres will depend on funding.

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Landmines, Continued

In the face of the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament, the progress on landmines demonstrates the importance of NGOs in the disarmament process. Strong NGO anti-landmine campaigns throughout the world resulted in the progress on landmines, and gives hope for civil society to lead the way on other disarmament issues.

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Terrorism

Terrorism was a subject in most of the debates on weapons systems this year, and the First Committee opened its 60th session immediately following a terrorist attack in Bali, Indonesia. The United States expressed its concern about terrorist acquisition of WMD during the first week of this session of the First Committee: "Today our foremost fear is the acquisition and possible use of weapons of mass destruction by rogue states, by terrorists, or, perhaps most worrisome of all, by terrorists armed by rogue states. Deterrence is a weak reed on which to lean in confronting these kinds of factors, who fundamentally will not be deterred."

Security Council resolution 1540 was established to address this concern. It establishes legally binding obligations on all UN member states to enact and enforce legal and regulatory measures to prevent proliferation of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their delivery systems by state or non state actors.

However, this concern spans the entire range of weapons. The EU expressed concern during the first week of this session by stating that the easy access to small arms and light weapons facilitates terrorism, and that much had to be done to control the proliferation of these weapons (brokering, control of transfers and provisions on ammunitions). It made special mention of the use of Man Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS) as a means to threaten civil aviation.

A Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism is currently being drafted in the 6th Committee to try to address all of these concerns where they continue to struggle to arrive at the long-contested definition of terrorism, on which the First Committee does not agree either (See Terrorism Week 1).

The First Committee voted on three resolutions relating to terrorism. "General and complete disarmament: measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction" (A/C.1/60/L.51) urges states to cooperate to avoid terrorists acquiring WMD. It was adopted without a vote.

The new French draft resolution "Preventing the risk of radiological terrorism" (A/C.1/60/L.39) aims at better control over radiological materials and their means of production, to prevent their use by terrorists to make a "dirty bomb". Because of last minute revisions of the resolution to ensure consensus, France read a handful of "stylistic" oral amendments to the text on Friday October 28, to reflect previously consensus adopted texts verbatim. A vote was taken on this resolution by mistake as no delegation actually called for a registered vote. The resolution was therefore adopted with 162 votes in favor and none against and none abstained. "General and complete disarmament: prevention of the illicit

it transfer and unauthorized access to and use of man-portable air defense systems" focuses in particular on control over man-portable devices. The resolution introduced by Australia was adopted without a vote. (See Conventional Weapons Report)

While the approval of these resolutions is a positive sign, in order to prevent the realization of the main fear regarding terrorism--terrorist acquisition of WMD--states must act, not just talk. Many states believe the only way to prevent this is to totally eliminate WMD, a challenge that requires cooperation and concerted action to be met.

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Nuclear Weapon Free Zones, Cont.

The NWF Southern Hemisphere (A/C.1/60/L.12) was adopted again this year, receiving 144 votes in favor. Six states, Bhutan, India, Israel, Pakistan, Russia and Spain, abstained from the resolution, and France, the UK and the US were the solitary votes against once again. France, on behalf of these three, was concerned this resolution was designed to affect the law of the seas. The Indian delegation explained their abstention: "in calling for the establishment of a NWFZ in South Asia, this specific proposal logically has no greater validity than the establishment of NWFZs ...in East Asia, Western Europe or North America."

L.6, on nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, is rife with controversy. The week the First Committee voted on resolutions, the Iranian president suggested "Israel be wiped off the map." This statement was rebuked by figures from the Pope to Kofi Annan to Palestinian spokespeople. The L.6 resolution, which Israel considers completely one-sided and biased, calls for Israel to accede to the NPT as a Non-Nuclear Weapon State. Israel's neighbors, including Jordan and Egypt, argue that balance and peace in the region will be impossible if one nation outweighs the others in weaponry capability. This dialogue is particularly relevant given the ongoing situation with Iran's nuclear program. The L.6 resolution received 159 votes in favor, two votes against (US and Israel) and four abstentions (Australia, Ethiopia, India, Cameroon). The EU and Canada noted their concern with the omission of Iranian IAEA compliance in the resolution.

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