

# 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:

**Amnesty International;**  
**Global Action to Prevent War;**  
**International Association of Lawyers**  
**Against Nuclear Arms;**  
**International Action Network on Small Arms;**  
**Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy;**  
**Middle Powers Initiative;**  
**NGO Committee on Disarmament,**  
**Peace and Security;**  
**Quaker United Nations Office; and**  
**Women's International League**  
**for Peace and Freedom.**



*The Monitor* is a weekly report produced by the NGO Working Group on the First Committee, a collaborative effort undertaken by non-governmental organizations to make the work of the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security more transparent. *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 provides services to activists, diplomats, UN-staffers, academicians and others, including:

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



## Introduction

We begin again. In 2006, the world's disarmament consensus-building body is meeting after another international disarmament failure—this time in small arms and light weapons (SALW), previously the only area of progress. While most of the first week's general debate speeches, much as they did last year, have chronicled the international disarmament failures—the 2005 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, the World Summit, the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the Disarmament Commission, and now the 2006 SALW Review Conference—this year governments have suggestions about what to do about it, and they have some hope that these will work. There is also a woman (Ambassador Mona Juul of Norway) chairing the Committee for the first time, as well as an increase in substantive formal civil society involvement, both of which bode well for progress.

Most of the energy of the First Committee is swirling around developing an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), a treaty which would, for the first time, regulate trade in all conventional weapons. A group of governments has introduced a draft resolution calling for the UN to set up a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) to examine the feasibility of a treaty to establish common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms. (See ATT report) The First Committee is also busy working on SALW. Governments have suggested using the First Committee to create a follow-up mechanism for the Programme of Action on SALW.

The work to control conventional and small arms and light weapons is greatly needed, both in terms of lives lost daily and in terms of resources misspent. Not only do these weapons kill, they also cost. Last year, the world spent over 1 trillion dollars on the military. We must decide to spend our resources on improving the human condition instead of destroying it. The Department for Disarmament Affairs' new Under-Secretary General is right, there are powerful economic interests making a profit from selling these weapons, but billions more people stand to profit from their control. Governments must act in their interest. (See Disarmament and Development report)

On the nuclear side, people are focusing their efforts on the upcoming NPT review process and on the Conference on Disarmament (CD). There will be a resolution in the First Committee asking the UN to service the 2007 NPT Preparatory Committee. Governments have not yet agreed, however, on whether they prefer to hold it New York, keeping with tradition, or move it to Vienna, where the International Atomic Energy Agency and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty Organization are located. The most important thing will be to set a tone of cooperation and agreement early on.

Although there is not going to be a controversial resolution

about the CD this year, crucial negotiations for the 2007 session are taking place on the sidelines of the First Committee. The 2007 presidents of the CD, particularly South Africa which will be the first president, are determining how to build on the year long substantive discussions set up by the 2006 presidents. With momentum, precedent, and the support of governments and civil society behind them, we believe they will be able to live up to the world's expectations and bring the CD back to a working mode. (See Disarmament Machinery report)

Canada will also be re-introducing its Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) resolution, which is particularly important given the possibility of the CD getting back to work. The original mandate for an FMCT grew out of a consensus First Committee resolution in 1993. Negotiations on this year's resolution are likely to be difficult, as the US is resisting the previously agreed verification of an FMCT, and because controversy over how to address stockpiles of fissile materials continues.

All of this work is taking place against the backdrop of increasing international tensions and confrontation over Iran and North Korea's nuclear programmes. On October 3, North Korea announced its intention to conduct a nuclear weapons test, which could seriously damage the nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation regime. It looks as though the Security Council will again address Iran's nuclear programme, after waiting for a month for more diplomatic efforts. These situations are of course very different; North Korea is declaring a nuclear weapons capability while Iran insists its nuclear programme is entirely peaceful and that it is being unjustly targeted with accusations. They are both being dealt with in the Security Council, and share the common characteristics of increasing escalation, threats and confrontation. The cooperative multilateral work in the First Committee stands in stark contrast to the coercive escalation of conflict taking place outside Conference Room IV. (See North Korea report and Iran report)

The First Committee should be motivated to prove that its work in a cooperative multilateral mode is more effective than coercion and escalation. It is time to move disarmament and nonproliferation progress back into multilateral frameworks by showing they are more effective. We provide the tools for the arguments that cooperation, multilateralism, and international law work. We not only create the atmosphere, we also create the reality. We have to build a foundation together so as to be in a position to seize political opportunities when they arise; we cannot just wait for them to come.

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



## Nuclear Disarmament

The baseline for the analyses of the state of nuclear disarmament in speeches in the general debate of the First Committee was the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to reach a substantive, consensus agreement on advancing the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. The vast majority of states reaffirmed the validity of the decisions at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences, especially the 13 Practical Steps that were a part of the 2000 consensus.

The European Union (EU), in a statement delivered by Finland, said the EU will “defend that consensus,” adding that the 13 Practical Steps “constitutes a reference for the future review process in which the EU will engage.” Speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), Lesotho said the agreements “should form the basis for future discussions on the issue of nuclear disarmament. The ongoing concerted efforts in combating terrorism should be coupled with genuine efforts towards the implementation of the NPT, particularly its Article VI.” Tanzania, recalling the consensus on the 13 steps, said, “so far there is no evidence of commitment from member states to support that initial optimism. Nevertheless, we still believe that the future of the NPT rests on the implementation of the 13 practical steps as a useful way to move forward.”

On the specific initiatives embedded in the 13 steps, governments focused on qualitative rather than quantitative problems with nuclear weapons. There was only fleeting references to the two arms control treaties between the United States and Russia: the Strategic Arms Reductions Treaty (START) and the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT). Russia only mentioned START, and the US mentioned neither.

Instead, the non-nuclear weapon states concentrated on the role of nuclear weapons in strategic planning. Egypt, speaking on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, South Africa, Sweden, New Zealand), said the coalition was concerned about “plans to research the development of

new types and uses of nuclear weapons and modifications of existing ones.” Tanzania said, “We urge nuclear weapon states to change their defense doctrines from cold war configuration legacy to new global collective security. We see no merit in trying to upgrade existing nuclear weapons and precision of their delivery systems.” The Holy See called for efforts “to legalize negative security assurances” and to take weapons off alert.

Looking even further ahead, several states called for an international conference on nuclear disarmament. Bangladesh called for convening an international conference that would arrive at “an agreement on a phased programme that would provide for the elimination of all nuclear weapons, prohibition of their development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and their destruction. We urge also for concluding a Nuclear Weapons Convention.”

While the policy positions were clear, there were few indications in this first week as to how these positions would be translated into draft resolutions. The 2005 Japanese-sponsored resolution on Renewed Determination towards the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons garnered the widest support for a text on specific disarmament steps (166 to two, with seven abstentions). This week, Ambassador Yoshiki Mine said only that the 2006 draft would refer to the workings of the Conference on Disarmament and the NPT review process.

The New Agenda Coalition, in its statement delivered by Egypt, noted that it will submit a resolution “for the acceleration of implementation” of the disarmament commitments under the NPT, but provided no details..

A seven-nation coalition led by Norway worked to get more specific disarmament and non-proliferation language in the 2005 UN Summit document. Norway recalled these efforts but offered no specifics on future plans other than to say, “We will continue our

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## Arms Trade Treaty

Despite some technical and procedural concerns, during plenary and side meetings of the First Committee, governments from around the world voiced support for a new resolution to examine the idea of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) that would better regulate the proliferation of conventional arms. The co-authors of the resolution will hold a separate, open lunchtime meeting on Monday, October 9 to discuss the issue further.

During the plenary meetings, several governments publicly stated their support for a treaty to regulate the trade in conventional arms, or an Arms Trade Treaty, including Brazil, Canada, the EU (in a statement by Finland), Jamaica, Nigeria, Turkey, and Serbia. Nigeria's Ambassador Simeon Adekanye said, "we also call for a comprehensive and legally binding Arms Trade Treaty. We believe that such a Treaty should establish a common standard on arms transfers, regulate international arms trade and ensure their non-diversion to unauthorized end-users."

On Wednesday, October 5, the authors of the resolution (Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Kenya, and the United Kingdom) held their first side lunchtime meeting to introduce a new version of the resolution, which was released months ago. Similarly to the previous version, the resolution calls for the UN to set up a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) to examine the feasibility of a treaty to establish common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms.

The Control Arms Campaign has been highlighting the proliferation of conventional arms' severe impact on civilians, and the new version of the resolution includes a reference to international human rights and humanitarian law in the preamble.

The title of the resolution was also changed to Towards an Arms Trade Treaty: Establishing Common International Standards for the Import, Export and Transfer of Conventional Arms to better reflect the intent of the resolution. Responding to some govern-

ment concerns, the co-authors also inserted language calling for the UN Secretary-General to seek the views of member states on an ATT and to submit a report to the General Assembly.

During the lunchtime meeting, several governments intervened to give their support for the new resolution and specifically the addition of human rights language. A couple of states also observed that the text approaches the issue from the supply side, and that it could be useful also to refer to it from the demand side. Others noted there was some discrepancy in terms and their meanings within the text.

A few member states voiced concerns about the resolution's operational paragraphs 2 and 3 on the creation of a GGE. These states said the creation of a GGE was prescriptive in nature and the next steps should come after a UN Secretary-General's report that collects the views of governments, as is the traditional practice. Several states expressed a desire to reach consensus on the initiative, while others mentioned their intent to become co-sponsors of the resolution in the coming weeks.

-Waverly de Bruijn, Global Action to Prevent War ([www.globalactionpw.org](http://www.globalactionpw.org)) and  
- Colby Goodman, Amnesty International ([www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org))

## Nuclear Disarmament, cont.

efforts in connection with the upcoming NPT-review cycle."

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



## North Korea

The current situation in the Korean Peninsula, with the announcement of a possible nuclear test, could threaten the viability of the non-proliferation regime. Recent years have seen the failure of the 2005 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference as well as the decision of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) to withdraw from the NPT in January 2003. Six-Party Talks (China, Japan, DPRK, Republic of Korea, Russia, and United States) aimed at resolving the nuclear controversy on the Korean Peninsula broke down in 2005. This occurred after the United States imposed financial sanctions against the DPRK in response to alleged involvement in money laundering and counterfeiting. More recently, the July 2006 missile tests conducted by the DPRK exacerbated tensions in the region, resulting in the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1695(2006).

During the general debate, Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs Tanaka drew attention to the issues troubling the non-proliferation regime and urged greater progress in dealing with the situation in the Korean Peninsula. Several delegates hoped the DPRK would return to the discussions. Switzerland, Egypt and others called upon DPRK to rejoin the NPT, and New Zealand and the Russian Federation pushed for its return to the Six-Party Talks. The European Union, in a statement delivered by Finland, further counseled DPRK to forgo its nuclear weapons programme. China noted its support for a return to the Six-Party Talks but also expressed concern for the state of the non-proliferation regime and cautioned against further escalations. On October 2, Ambassador Cheng Jingye stated, "Resorting to sanction or exerting pressure will not solve problems at the root. Instead, it may lead to escalation of crisis with negative effects in the end."

The following day, October 3, 2006, the DPRK announced it would conduct a nuclear test. While the exact date of the test is not known, North Korea Workers' Party Day is on Monday October 9, fueling speculation that this is when the test may take place. The United States responded to the DPRK's announcement, stating, "A provocative action of this nature would only further isolate the North Korean

regime and deny the people of the North the benefits offered to them in the Six Party Talks that they so rightly deserve." While no mention was made of the financial sanctions, the United States continues to insist that the DPRK fulfill its obligations under the September 2005 Joint Statement that resulted from the talks.

On October 4, the Republic of Korea pushed for restraint and a return to the Six-Party Talks, stating that a nuclear test would be interpreted as "tantamount to an abrogation of the South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." Japan echoed this sentiment, expressing that such a test would threaten the non-proliferation regime. Japan urged the DPRK to comply with the UN Security Council resolution 1695 (2006) and to return to the Six-Party Talks. A nuclear test might nullify all progress made to date in creating a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula.

On October 6, the Security Council issued a unanimous statement expressing "deep concern" over the possibility of a nuclear test. The statement goes on to say, "[S]hould the DPRK ignore calls of the international community, the Security Council will act consistent with its responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations." The future of the NPT and of the multi-lateral disarmament machinery could change dramatically should a nuclear explosion take place.

The actuality of a nuclear test by DPRK would have severe repercussions for the NPT and disarmament machinery. The possibility of diplomacy would be in doubt. Deputy Permanent Representative Mr. Eric Walsh of Canada expressed this, noting, "we risk seeing the non-proliferation norm undermined and the world slip back into an unregulated competition for nuclear weapons." If the DPRK is successful in developing and testing a nuclear weapon after leaving the NPT, then the integrity of the non-proliferation regime is in peril.

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



## Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)

During the general debate of the First Committee, an overwhelming majority of states voiced support for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Originally opened for signing in 1996, this year marks the 10th anniversary of the CTBT. With this in mind, many states agreed it is time for the ten remaining Annex II states to ratify the treaty. The forty four states identified in Annex II of the CTBT have significant nuclear programmes, so their ratifications are necessary for the treaty to enter into force. Of those, China, Colombia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, and the United States have not yet ratified the treaty.

Viet Nam, who signed the CTBT in 1996, just ratified the treaty this past March and is the most recent Annex II state to complete this process. This week, Viet Nam described the CTBT as one of the "most significant achievements we have recorded relating to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation" and stressed that it is "an important measure to preserve world peace and international security."

The EU, represented by Finland, gave a nod to Viet Nam for its ratification and encouraged all remaining states to follow suit "without delay and without conditions." Many delegations, including New Zealand, Australia, Jamaica, Fiji, Bangladesh, the Holy See, Russian Federation, Southern African Development Community and Association of Southeast Asian Nations, echoed this sentiment.

Kazakhstan, who has felt the effects of nuclear testing first hand, urged remaining states to sign and ratify the treaty. Kazakhstan said its people are "still reeling from negative effects of nuclear explosions" at the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground; it strongly encouraged nations who have not yet ratified the CTBT to "display the political will and genuine commitment" necessary to bring it into force. The massive civil society Nevada-Semipalatinsk International Anti-Nuclear Movement forced the closure and eventual decommissioning of the test site.

Japan also encouraged states that have not yet signed or ratified the treaty to do so. Japan proudly noted that this past year, it held talks with India, Pakistan and Israel, three Annex II states, to encourage their participation. Unfortunately, neither Israel nor India mentioned the CTBT in their statements. India said it "has continued to observe a moratorium on nuclear explosive tests."

Some other Annex II states claimed support for the CTBT, despite delays in their ratification. Indonesia, for example, said it plans to press on with its constitutional process to ratify the treaty. Colombia also has had difficulty ratifying the CTBT due to "constitutional impediments," but said it believes in the treaty and promised to make "every possible effort towards overcoming the difficulties around this situation." Thailand is not an Annex II state, but noted its support for the CTBT and explained that the Thai government is currently "amending domestic laws and regulations" which will allow the CTBT to be ratified.

Outside the First Committee this week, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) stated that it intends to conduct its first nuclear test. Japan made a special request to address the committee for a second time to respond to this declaration. Concerned that nuclear tests will destabilize the peace and security regionally and internationally, Japan maintained that "[n]uclear testing by the DPRK is totally unacceptable" and urged the DPRK "to exercise maximum restraint and refrain from conducting any nuclear testing."

The Republic of Korea, a supporter of the CTBT, expressed "profound concern and regret, as the declaration (by the DPRK) is tantamount to an abrogation of the South-North Joint Declaration on the Denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula."

The United States also voiced concerns over the intent of the DPRK to conduct nuclear tests. The US delegation projected that, "the test of a nuclear weapon would only bring its further isolation and would



## Iran

In contrast to how the escalating crisis over Iran's nuclear programme is portrayed in the U.S. media, the first week of the general debate of the UN General Assembly's First Committee on Disarmament and International Security underscored prominent divisions on this issue within the international community. As highlighted below, the sometimes subtle disagreements on this matter underlie divergences between the priorities of the Global North and South, between concerns at the regional and international levels, and even between the latent geopolitical interests of the East and West.

The debate in the First Committee now takes place against the backdrop of renewed negotiations among the permanent members of the UN Security Council and Germany on measures to adopt against Iran under Article 41 of the UN Charter. Such sanctions would serve as a penalty for Iran's failure to implement Security Council Resolution 1696 which, abandoning the traditional language by which the Security Council creates binding obligations, "demands... that Iran shall suspend all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, including research and development" (emphasis added).

While all states agree that Iran should not be allowed to acquire nuclear weapons, there is ample evidence of disunity and disagreement on the basic nature of the dispute and how to address it. Indeed, despite the large number of states that took to the floor to comment on this issue, only the United States and Israel explicitly described Iran's nuclear programme as a "threat". As another potential sign of disagreement over the nature of the problem, Kuwait, which is closely situated to Iran and which provides bases for U.S. troops in the region, chose to emphasize its concerns over the environmental risks posed by Iran's nuclear programme rather than its proliferation risk.

Wary of inciting additional confrontation in a tense region, many Arab states, including Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates expressed their belief that a diplomatic and negotiated settlement is

the only way to solve the dispute. Libya, also backing negotiations and allowing for more time to reach agreement, warned that the threat of sanctions or use of force would not solve the situation but only make it more complicated.

Many states, particularly from the developing world, commented with concern about the conduct of diplomacy over Iran's nuclear programme and took the opportunity to voice emphatic support for the rights of all states recognized under Article IV of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. As stated by Brazil, in a sentiment echoed by the representatives from China, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in a statement delivered by Indonesia, and most of the Arab states, "non-proliferation efforts must... respect the basic and inalienable right of all States, to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without any discrimination and in conformity with applicable legal obligations." Over the past year in particular, NAM has strongly backed Iran's development of nuclear energy.

The representative from South Africa particularly stressed and elaborated upon the point of Article IV, rejecting the "subjective notion that such sensitive [nuclear] material and technologies are safe in the hands of some States, but pose risk when other access them." Taken together, these strong statements backing the right to nuclear energy and advocating balanced non-proliferation measures do not necessarily constitute an endorsement of Iran's pursuit of the nuclear fuel cycle. Rather, they signal a subtle but unambiguous critique of the approach taken by certain states that seek to achieve the cessation of sensitive nuclear activities in Iran, removed from the context of Iran's treaty-based non-proliferation and safeguards obligations. These statements also underscore concern that the Iran case might set a precedent for the arbitrary curtailment of rights by the major industrialized powers.

Both Russia and China emphasized their support for political and diplomatic solutions to the problems re-

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## Nuclear Weapon Free Zones

### Where to from here?

Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs) were one of the most talked about topics in the general debate of the First Committee this year with nearly 40 countries making a supportive reference to one or more of the actual or proposed zones.

Many governments welcomed the establishment of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (CAN-WFZ) which increases the number of regional and single state NWFZs to seven (Antarctica, Latin America and the Caribbean, South Pacific, South East Asia, Africa, Central Asia and Mongolia) and the number of states members of such zones to 113. While there are some variations in the obligations of the different NWFZs, all of them commit the parties not to acquire nuclear weapons or station them on their territory.

The success of the Central Asian NWFZ, which was signed despite intense opposition from some of the nuclear weapon states (see CANWFZ report), boosts the possibility for the establishment of NWFZs in other regions.

Belarus used the occasion to renew its proposal for a NWFZ in Central and Eastern Europe. Such a zone could include a number of non-contiguous European countries which are committed not to acquire or station nuclear weapons on their territories.

A number of governments, including the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Bangladesh, Algeria, Viet Nam and the Non-Aligned Movement, called for action on the proposal to make the Middle East a NWFZ or a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Others called for South Asia to become a NWFZ.

Viet Nam indicated that one of the difficulties in establishing NWFZs is getting the nuclear weapon states (NWS) to respect the zones. Each NWFZ includes protocols under which the NWS agree not to threaten or use nuclear weapons against member states or to deploy nuclear weapons in the territory. Some NWS have either been reluctant to endorse these protocols, or have attached reservations to them in order to

protect their nuclear deployment policies. Viet Nam noted, for example, that only China has signed the protocols to the South East Asia NWFZ. The other NWS are concerned that to do so might prevent them from transiting the straits of South East Asia with their nuclear-armed submarines.

The fact that NWFZs do not require the immediate support of the NWS to enter-into-force has, however, been vital in their establishment. For example, it took ten years after entry-into-force of the South Pacific NWFZ for France, the UK and the US to sign its protocols. That all NWS eventually signed, is a positive example for other regions to follow and to proceed in establishing NWFZs even when there is a lack of support from the NWS.

One of the most interesting NWFZs to have been established is the Mongolian single-state NWFZ, established in 2000; the only zone of its kind. Whereas a number of countries have adopted domestic legislation to prohibit nuclear weapons (such as New Zealand's 1987 Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Act) that binds those acting under the jurisdiction of the state, a single state NWFZ also seeks binding commitments from the NWS to honor the zone, making it more like a regional NWFZ. Thus, in its report to the UN General Assembly, Mongolia gave an account of its actions to seek agreements with the NWS on recognizing the zone. Mongolia also reported on activities to codify its NWFZ through domestic legislation. The UN Secretary-General circulated a report on Mongolia's NWFZ indicating the support the UN has given Mongolia in its establishment of the zone.

In April 2005, Mexico hosted the first ever conference of States Parties and Signatories to Nuclear Weapon Free Zones. Unlike the failure in the 2005 NPT Review Conference, the NWFZ conference, representing over 100 countries, adopted a strong and forward looking declaration on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

These developments gave rise to a general feeling in

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## Nuclear Proliferation

Perhaps it is not mere coincidence that the year 2005, where states twice failed to adopt measures to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime at the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and at the World Summit, has been followed in 2006 by a year of proliferation crises. Yet to one state particularly interested in these disputes, the glass is half-full. Despite the long history of the disputes over the nuclear programmes in Iran and the DPRK, the representative from the United States declared that the future “may view 2006 as a watershed year” because “after far too many years of inaction” the UN Security Council has finally begun to address these two issues. (see Iran and DPRK reports)

Representatives of other Western states, notably Australia and the European Union, share the US’s view that the Security Council should become more involved in matters of proliferation. According to the statement by the EU, delivered by Finland, “the role of the UN Security Council, as the arbiter on the consequences of non-compliance, needs to be effectively strengthened.” Qatar complained that breaches of non-proliferation obligations have not resulted in the adoption of punitive measures or sanctions.

Focusing on the need to improve the multilateral machinery, Canada called for strengthening the NPT, consistent with the view expressed in the Report of the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Commission, which noted that “the NPT is the weakest of the treaties on WMD in terms of provisions about implementation.” Toward addressing this “institutional deficit,” Canada proposed annual meetings of the States Parties and the creation of a standing secretariat “to provide stewardship and continuity.” China advocated adoption of concrete measures to strengthen the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Other states, however, expressed the belief that proliferation can only be successfully addressed by ameliorating its root causes. In this context, Indonesia warned, “symptomatic treatment and ad hoc solutions will not yield durable results.” Pakistan noted that the motives driving states to acquire weapons of mass destruction must be addressed. In Pakistan’s

view such drivers of proliferation include: disputes with major powers; threats from states that possess superior conventional and unconventional military capabilities; and the growing inequity in the application of international law.

Wary of other imbalances that threaten to overshadow cooperative approaches to security, Russia noted, “depression in the disarmament efforts, naturally, negatively affects the process of containing proliferation.” Many other states, including the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), also reaffirmed their belief in the inextricable link between the pursuit of non-proliferation and disarmament goals. In this context, Egypt, on behalf of NAC, noted that “there is no doubt that the international disarmament efforts have not lived up to our collective aspirations and shared commitments.” (see Nuclear Disarmament report)

China was concerned that through the conduct of diplomacy “double standards and opportunism remain unabated and the international proliferation regime is in danger of being further weakened.” China also appealed for the international community “to strike a balance” between non-proliferation and regional stability on one hand, and on the legitimate security concerns and rights of states on the other hand.

Despite the concern expressed by Mexico that the issues of proliferation, terrorism, and the non-state acquisition of weapons of mass destruction has undermined disarmament, states have been able to point to progress preventing proliferation. In particular, Russia pointed to its proposal put forward with the U.S. and supported by the G8 on the Joint Global Initiative to Prevent Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and the 2005 Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Recognizing that the implementation of UNSC resolution 1540 will be a long term endeavor, the EU welcomed UNSC resolution 1673 for the extension of the 1540 Committee’s mandate by two years.

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



## Negative Security Assurances

Negative security assurances are guarantees by nuclear weapon states (NWS) not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against states that have formally renounced nuclear weapons. The non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) have traditionally pressed for such assurances in the form of a freestanding treaty. Positive Security Assurances are agreements between non-nuclear weapon states and nuclear weapon states that assistance will be provided to non-nuclear weapon states if they are the victims of nuclear-weapons aggression or are threatened by nuclear weapons.

The total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons, but until then, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has been the most vocal in insisting upon legally binding negative security assurances for NNWS. During the general debate, the NAM again called for a legally-binding treaty on negative security assurances, as did many of its members. Tanzania noted that negative security assurances would only apply to States Parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). A legally binding treaty could, however, work as an incentive for the remaining states to join the NPT and for State Parties to comply with it.

Pakistan, a member of NAM that possesses nuclear weapons, said that “until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear weapon states should have the assurances that nuclear weapons will not be used against them. The security assurances offered by nuclear weapon states should be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty.” India, the other nuclear-weapon possessing member of NAM, reiterated its nuclear doctrine of non-use of nuclear weapons against NNWS.

Israel did not address the issue of negative security assurances.

China is the only nuclear weapon state recognized under the NPT that has made an unconditional assurance not to be the first to use nuclear weapons against NNWS or nuclear weapons free zones, at any time or under any circumstances.

Other nuclear weapon states have, however, made reservations and some have said that using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states could be an option under certain circumstances. The United States and France have declared in their military doctrines that they maintain the option of using nuclear weapons as a retaliatory measure in the case of an attack on them with any weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical or biological weapons.

Giving legally binding negative security assurances to non-nuclear States Parties in compliance with the NPT would certainly be a significant incentive to remain a party to the treaty in good standing. It would also remove a major NNWS point of contention and bolster confidence at a time when the treaty regime desperately needs it.

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

## Iran, cont.

lated to Iran. Without mentioning the issue of suspension of uranium enrichment or the role of the Security Council, Russia called for a solution that would “allow Iran to develop nuclear energy under the IAEA safeguards, and assure the exclusive nature of Teheran’s nuclear program.” Likewise, China similarly upheld Iran’s right to nuclear energy, expressing its hope that the parties to the dispute would exhibit greater flexibility. Despite the fact that both these states have been necessarily involved in the evolution of this matter before the Security Council, they have clearly not exhibited much enthusiasm or optimism for this approach, most emphatically favored by only a small handful of states.

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



## Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS)

Once again, the First Committee looks with apprehension towards the future of outer space. Last year, the Russian Federation and Sri Lanka respectively introduced resolutions on promoting transparency and confidence building in outer space and on preventing an arms race in outer space (PAROS). Both resolutions were adopted by an overwhelming majority in the First Committee, with only the United States voting against them and Israel abstaining from the votes. The US's rejection of these resolutions marked a hardening of its stance over outer space issues. While this year's Conference on Disarmament (CD) did have substantive dialogue on PAROS, the US continues to resist establishing an ad hoc committee on PAROS, let alone starting negotiations on a PAROS treaty. They were, however, open to continue discussing it.

While refraining from mentioning outer space in this year's First Committee general debate, the US did state that "only one item before the [CD] is currently ripe for negotiation, namely, a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty." Last year, the US stated that "there is no arms race [in outer space] to address," and, therefore, no need to take action against a "hypothetical" situation. Bangladesh, Belarus, China, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, Nepal, Norway, Pakistan, and Venezuela expressed concern over a potential arms race in outer space and called for further action from the CD in developing relevant international legal instruments to prevent the weaponization of space. Canada and Syria were also significantly concerned about outer space security, and suggested the First Committee address the issue.

The Russian Federation, which is concerned that US weapons in space would disrupt strategic parity among the big military powers, continues its efforts to prevent the placement of weapons in outer space and to secure the safety of space assets and the operation of spacecraft. Deciding that "the time has come to review the entire range of confidence-building measures in outer space from the modern viewpoint and update the proposals on this issue that

were elaborated in the United Nations (UN)" in the early 1990s, the Russian Federation is introducing a new draft resolution, Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities. It last year introduced a new draft resolution with a similar title, Measures to Promote Transparency and Confidence-Building in Outer Space. Russia also reiterated its call on all states with military space capabilities to pledge not to be the first to place any weapons in outer space.

Canada and SpaceSecurity.org co-sponsored an event entitled "Space Security in 2006: Challenges and Opportunities." The panel discussion focused on the centrality of space in international security, non-proliferation, and disarmament, and the rapid evolution of space as a strategic environment.

Ambassador Thomas Graham, Jr., Chairman of the Cypress Fund for International Peace and Security, argued that keeping space free from weapons is the best option to "protect space assets and preserve space for all humanity in an age of increasing dependence on space systems." He warned that the deployment of space weapons would increase the risk of an accidental strategic nuclear-weapon attack, and lead to a space arms competition, which would, subsequently, "threaten many of the crucial activities in space upon which our security and our economic well-being relies."

Scott Lofquist-Morgan, a researcher for SpaceSecurity.org and the Canadian Centre for Treaty Compliance, explained that "space security is not merely the preclusion of dedicated space based weapons." Rather, the international community's mismanagement of any area of space security – civilian and commercial space programmes, laws and doctrines, the environment, etc. – "will undoubtedly erode the effectiveness of any initiatives that are taken" to preserve space for peaceful uses and prevent an arms race.

Lofquist-Morgan also introduced the Space Security

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## Disarmament Machinery

Similarly to last year, most delegations at this year's First Committee expressed their disappointment in the failures of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and the World Summit meetings of 2005. These failures were followed this year by the lack of substantive work in the Disarmament Commission (DC); the failure of to agree on a final document in the 2006 UN Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW); and the continued inability of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to reach an agreement on a programme of work.

Unlike last year, however, there is a sense of hope for the future, and a practical attitude about using the First Committee as a tool to make these hopes a reality. States expressed hope for positive outcomes for: the CD; the DC; the new NPT cycle; the upcoming review conferences on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) later this year; and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) Review in 2008.

Despite there being no agreement on a programme of work, substantive progress has been made in the 2006 CD session. Coordination among the six rotating presidents (known as the P6 Initiative) resulted in structured, focused debates on all agenda items. Many states expressed their appreciation for the efforts of the 2006 presidents. Switzerland, scheduled to take the presidency during 2007, stated that it strongly supports coordination among all 2007 presidents to consolidate the progress achieved in 2006. South Africa, who will serve as the first president of 2007, said they would hold consultations with states on how to break the impasse on a programme of work during the course of the First Committee.

The United States thought that this year has shown that the CD does not need to establish subsidiary bodies for an in-depth examination of issues of interest to member states, and should, therefore, only negotiate a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty since it is the only item "ripe" for negotiations. The CD has traditionally

negotiated in subsidiary bodies, such as ad hoc committees.

Pakistan said the Five Ambassadors' (A5) proposal, which would create ad hoc committees on Nuclear Disarmament, Prevention in an Arms Race in Outer Space, Negative Security Assurances, as well as a Fissile Material Treaty, still has support from a majority of members. It further stated that it was the attempts to tinker with the balance among those core issues that resulted in an impasse there being, "sufficient legal, technical and political basis for movement on all four issues. They will all qualify on grounds on contemporaneity and ripeness."

Last year, an initiative of six states (Brazil, Canada, Kenya, Mexico, Sweden and New Zealand) aimed to move around the consensus blocks in the CD and create ad hoc committees on the four core issues of the CD agenda through the voting General Assembly. Ultimately they decided not to introduce a draft resolution, but said they would "anticipate its re-introduction in a more potent form next time if the Conference on Disarmament does not awaken."

There will not be a similar resolution this year either even though there was no programme of work adopted. Mexico and Kenya both said alternatives to the CD were still an option, but it appears the relative progress in the 2006 CD has bought it another year to begin negotiations. Mexico stated, "If the current situation persists...it will be necessary to search for alternatives that enable us to advance in the tasks that such forum is unable to fulfill."

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) called for a Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD IV) and announced they would again table a draft resolution on this matter. In 2004, an open-ended working group was set up to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possibilities of establishing a preparatory committee, for an SSOD IV. The working group was, however, unable to achieve consensus and failed to achieve

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## Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone

### Empty Symbolism or a Genuine Step to Nuclear Disarmament?

The issue of nuclear weapons free zones took on new life this year with the First Committee opening in the wake of the Central Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty being established by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. Under the treaty, which was signed on 8 September 2006, all five states commit themselves not to acquire nuclear weapons or allow them to be stationed on their territory. In addition, the states commit themselves to adopting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) additional protocol on nuclear safeguards.

The establishment of the zone – the first regional zone entirely in the northern hemisphere – was welcomed by many states (including Russia, Indonesia, Turkey, Colombia and Algeria) as a positive non-proliferation initiative. However, tension on the issue was evident in the speech from H.E. Yerzhan Kh. Kazykhanov, Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan, who admonished the United Nations Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA) for failing to comment on what he called “one of the most important developments in the area of nonproliferation over recent years.”

One might be tempted to explain such non-reference by the DDA merely as a reflection of a commonly held perspective that Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (NWFZs) do not advance the non-proliferation and disarmament agenda because they are merely a symbolic affirmation of current practices by the States involved.

On the other hand, one might conclude the opposite – that NWFZs are a very significant non-proliferation and disarmament step that impose obligations on both non-nuclear and nuclear weapon states and that the DDA was caught between the Central Asian States – that are committed to nuclear disarmament – and some nuclear weapon states that are strongly resisting any restrictions on their nuclear weapons deployment practices.

The latter conclusion finds support in the fact that the treaty “was negotiated with direct involvement and under the auspices of the United Nations.” Former head of DDA, UN Under-Secretary General Jayantha

Dhanapala, was very active in supporting the negotiations for the zone; visiting all five Central Asian States on this issue during his term. In fact, there had been a number of difficulties in the negotiations which required new approaches and the conclusion of the treaty might, in some way, be attributable to his excellent shuttle-diplomacy.

In addition, while the negotiations reached conclusion in 2005, the treaty’s signing was delayed by opposition from the United States, France and Britain. They argued that previous security agreements between Central Asian States and Russia – agreements that might possibly allow for deployment of Russian missiles in the region – were given precedence over the treaty. The US also expressed concern that the treaty could ban transit of their own nuclear-powered or nuclear-capable ships and aircraft through the region. Such was the opposition from the US that, immediately prior to Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbaev’s meeting with President Bush in early October, Kazakhstan ran advertisements in both the International Herald Tribune and the New York Times in order to highlight Kazakhstan’s peace and non-proliferation credentials and, possibly, to weaken US opposition to the treaty. Since the treaty’s signing in early September, France, the UK and the US have all said they will not support it. In the Conference on Disarmament, Kazakhstan said it was willing to sit down with the nuclear weapon states in order to work toward their support.

Pamela Meidell, director of the Atomic Mirror, congratulated the Central Asian States on the creation of the zone stating, “Despite the difficulties, this initiative is a bold step toward a nuclear free world. It demonstrates that countries and regions can work together to provide for their own security without bowing to pressure from the nuclear weapon states. This good news deserves celebration and inspires hope that additional NWFZs can be established in North East Asia, Central Europe, the Middle East and the Arctic.”

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



## International Court of Justice

### Courting Nuclear Weapons – 10 Years Since the Last Dance?

Ten years ago the International Court of Justice (ICJ) responded to a request from the UN General Assembly on the legal status of nuclear weapons by affirming unanimously that “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.”

Mexican ambassador Pablo Macedo, in noting the anniversary of this opinion, called for the urgent implementation of this obligation for “without effective disarmament our efforts to achieve non-proliferation will be seriously thwarted.”

Myanmar Ambassador U Thaung Tun, on behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), reaffirmed the 1996 ICJ opinion and announced that all ASEAN States would support the UN resolution calling for its implementation through negotiations leading to the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention.

In addition, Bolivia, Chile, Cuba, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), Georgia, Japan and the Syrian Arab Republic submitted reports to the UN Secretary-General on implementation of the ICJ opinion. The reports did not in all cases reflect positive forward movement. The DPRK, for example, which had argued before the Court in 1994 that the use of nuclear weapons would be illegal, sought to justify their subsequent decision to develop nuclear weapons on the grounds that “[t]he gangster-like logic that only big powers can have nuclear weapons to threaten and attack small countries with them should not be connived at or tolerated any longer.”

Apart from this small number of interventions and reports, there was very little to indicate that 10 years have passed since the ICJ decision – there having been minimal action by the nuclear weapon states to implement their disarmament obligations.

Latin American and Caribbean countries were expected to take a stronger stand at the UN General Assembly this year, following the adoption in Novem-

ber 2005 of the Santiago Declaration, in which they called upon “the United Nations General Assembly, on the occasion of the Xth anniversary of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, to consider the actions that States should undertake to fulfill nuclear disarmament obligations emanating from the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the 1996 Advisory Opinion.”

Some non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are hoping this is not a sign of disinterest in the ICJ opinion, but rather a case of saving the chips for bigger stakes, possibly next year. In July 2006, a meeting of NGOs and parliamentarians in the European Parliament discussed the ICJ opinion and a proposal to return to the Court for a follow-up case challenging non-compliance with the 1996 decision. Informal consultations on this proposal have begun between the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms and some interested countries.

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

### Disarmament Machinery, cont.

any results. In the light of the failures of recent years, NAM, and many of its members, considered it urgent to hold a SSOD to review disarmament machinery and supported the reactivation of the open-ended working group to prepare the session.

The Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, stated in his opening statement, “It is important – in all bodies of our disarmament machinery – to remind the world not only of the dangers that threaten us, but also that we are not powerless in face of them – that practical, positive steps are in our reach.”

- Beatrice Fihn – Reaching Critical Will ([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org))



## Disarmament and Development

Heavy arms expenditures remain a hindrance to correct allocation of the world's resources, including through aid to developing countries. In the First Committee's general debate, several governments juxtaposed ever-rising arms expenditures with development issues and diminishing budgets in particular in the areas of the Millennium Goals. Bangladesh noted that "it is appalling that the estimated global military expenditures exceeded US\$ 1 trillion in 2005 and [are] projected to keep rising. Most of these expenditures are the result of a frantic arms race that is increasingly having a negative impact on our development agenda. We urge all countries, particularly the major military powers, to divert part of these resources to poverty alleviation in developing countries. Such a move would greatly advance the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals by 2015." Morocco questioned such high arms expenditures given the current levels of development aid.

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) said, "significant progress in achieving nuclear disarmament, in halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in putting an end to the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, and in controlling those arms which are contemporary causes of mass destruction is essential, if all the world's peoples are to pursue their development in peace and security."

Cuba reiterated its proposal to devote at least half of the current military expenditures to meet the needs of economic and social development, through a fund managed by the UN.

The rise in arms expenditures has created the need for more monitoring and awareness-raising. Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs Tanaka noted that use of the UN standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures is rising, calling this "an achievement that will be all the more significant as global military spending continues to rise."

In addition to the military-expenditures link between disarmament and development, the two are related in terms of crime and infrastructure. For example,

landmines can significantly impede development and their removal makes way for investment and infrastructure. The Southern African Development Community pointed out that Africa is the most heavily mined continent, which disables the development of millions of acres of land, impeding economic recovery throughout the continent. Jamaica made the connection between excess weapons and crime impeding development: "[w]hen a significant proportion of the national budget is used to tackle crime and violence, then there can be no question about the linkage between disarmament and development."

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

## PAROS, cont.

Index (SSI), an annual publication from Spacesecurity.org that provides policy-neutral fact-based analysis of trends and developments in space security. Tools such as the SSI, offered by civil society to "facilitate dialogue on space security challenges and potential responses" in a "debate that has become unnecessarily polarized," are instrumental to resolving the crisis of the weaponization of outer space before it begins.

As Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, remarked this week, "it is not enough for us simply to anguish over the future." The First Committee should use the 61st session to create a new consensus on what Pakistan calls "emerging realities." The weaponization of space is not just a theory, it is a plan, indicated in part by the development of precursor technologies throughout the world. The threats posed to international security by the weaponization of space are imminent, and the First Committee has a chance to reflect this in its work this session.

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





## Conventional Weapons

“The proliferation of conventional weapons is also a matter of increasing concern to the international community,” said the Republic of Korea. Statements made during the First Committee reflected a deep and continued effort by the international community to tackle the negative effects of conventional weapons. Discussion focused on the failed 2006 UN Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons (see SALW report), the upcoming Review Conference on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), and the draft resolution calling for a conventional Arms Trade Treaty (see ATT report), among others.

The European Union, China, Switzerland, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Russia, South Africa and Turkey recognized the importance of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). Negotiated in 1980, the convention “aims to protect military troops from inhumane injuries and prevent noncombatants from accidentally being wounded or killed by certain types of arms.” (<http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/CCW.asp>)

Many states are anticipating the CCW’s Third Review Conference in November 2006, and will actively contribute to ensuring its success. In particular, Switzerland, New Zealand and the Republic of Korea would like to conclude the discussion on mines other than antipersonnel mines (MOTAPM) through the creation of a legally binding instrument. New Zealand supports the negotiation of a new legally binding instrument to address cluster munitions, and Switzerland would like to address sub-munitions. Russia prefers a “detailed and balanced review of the fulfillment of the convention, as well as for elaboration of realistic and balanced solutions.”

The Republic of Korea and Canada welcomed the coming entry into force of Protocol V on the Explosive Remnants of War. As the Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs Nobuaki Tanaka stated, “the final success of this vital endeavour is now in States Parties’ hands - in the ability to achieve further progress in the implementation of the convention and ensuring its compliance.”

Argentina welcomed co-sponsorship of the draft resolution “information in confidence building measures in the field of conventional arms,” which was previously adopted without a vote last year and the year before.

Israel, Kazakhstan and Turkey also highlighted the dangers of the proliferation and unauthorized use of Man-Portable Air Defence Systems (MANPADS). Israel noted with satisfaction that the First Committee has adopted the MANPADS resolution, which calls for preventing transfers of MANPADS to non-state actors, by consensus for the last two years.

Switzerland, Argentina, the Holy See, the Republic of Korea, and Turkey stated their satisfaction with the UN register of Conventional Arms.

Russia noted its regret that the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty’s entrance into force has been delayed, and urged its partners to continue to move forward on this. Armenia asserted that the CFE Treaty was being violated by Azerbaijan, who imported 44 battle ships and artillery, which is fueling an arms race in the Southern Caucasus.

Forward motion in the area of conventional weapons holds promise for this year’s First Committee, as long as political will and compromise continues.

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

### NWFZ, cont.

the First Committee that NWFZs are indeed a positive and growing development with considerable potential to expand further; increase regional security; strengthen norms and controls against nuclear weapons; constrain the NWS; and contribute to the achievement of a nuclear weapon free world.

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



## Verification and Transparency

The issue of the verification of various disarmament measures was repeatedly broached during the first week of the First Committee. Jamaica stated, “the approach to disarmament must be based on the principles of transparency, irreversibility, and verification.” Transparency allows other states to see what is going on, while verification gives technical assurances.

Many small non-nuclear weapon states called for greater transparency and means of verification from nuclear weapon states, in the context of nuclear disarmament and the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Ghana stated that the “world remains insecure and vulnerable to mass destruction,” stressing that “a verifiable and irreversible disarmament process is essential to the long-term credibility and viability of the NPT.”

Many states urged greater international support for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is responsible for verifying the peaceful nature of non-nuclear weapon states’ nuclear programmes. Ghana called for “the IAEA’s verification mechanism to be strengthened to enable the agency [to] scrupulously discharge its onerous responsibility.” Tanzania stressed the need for transnational cooperation, maintaining that, “[i]t is incumbent upon all states to give the IAEA unimpeded access to national nuclear programs.” Jamaica, while asserting the right for every state to aspire to peaceful uses of nuclear technology, insisted “this right must be accompanied by the commitment and obligation to comply with the verification and safeguards provisions of the International Atomic Energy Agency.”

Russia and Myanmar called for transparency in outer space. Russia announced its plans to submit a new draft resolution, Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, emphasizing that “[t]ransparency and confidence-building measures can serve the purpose of discouraging the placement of weapons in space.” Myanmar echoed these sentiments, stating, “transparency and confidence-building measures concerning outer space must be

promoted in the interest of maintaining international peace and security.” Last year, Russia submitted a similarly titled new draft resolution, Measures to promote transparency and confidence-building in outer space.

Throughout the week, states voiced widespread support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and several states, including Indonesia, New Zealand and Russia, lauded the development of the CTBT’s verification mechanism, the two-thirds complete and already operating International Monitoring System (IMS). Calling for continued support for the IMS, Serbia said, “the CTBT [must] be ready to monitor and verify once it is able to enter into force.”

There is also controversy about a verification mechanism for a Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT). The treaty is yet to be negotiated, but the United States is at odds with the rest of the Conference on Disarmament over whether such a treaty can be verified. Still, Nigeria advised against impeding negotiations, stating: “[w]hile Nigeria shares the view of the majority of delegations that the FMCT should contain a reliable verification mechanism that should not exclude existing stockpiles [another contentious issue], the debate over this issue should not be used as an excuse for inaction or delay.” Before negotiations on the CTBT began, some also questioned whether it would be verifiable, and a group of seismological experts came together to show scientifically how it could be verified. The 1996 UN Disarmament Commission agreed to 16 principles of verification, one of which states, “Verification arrangements should be addressed at the outset and at every stage of negotiations on specific arms limitation and disarmament agreements.” The recently formed International Panel on Fissile Materials has put out several papers addressing how an FMCT could be verified.

The Nigerian delegation also addressed the absence of “an effective verification mechanism” with respect to the Biological Weapons Convention. Such a mech-

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## Biological and Chemical Weapons

During the First Committee's general debate, governments were concerned about weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and their destruction, control, and non-proliferation. When they spoke in greater detail on WMD, however, they primarily addressed nuclear weapons. A few states also discussed the danger of biological and chemical weapons.

Approximately 25 statements addressed biological weapons. The vast majority of these mentioned the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). All of these statements supported the convention, and a few speakers called for an extension of the convention, so as to ensure better functioning, and for its universalization. Several states hoped the 6th BTWC Review Conference, which will be held in Geneva November 20-December 8, 2006, would result in further progress and a strengthened convention. Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Nobuaki Tanaka, pointed out in his statement before the First Committee that he has "hope that the forthcoming BWC Review Conference will contribute to enhancing transparency through strengthened confidence-building measures."

Only Turkey and Nigeria brought up the fact that the BTWC is missing a verification instrument. Turkey stated, "We believe that the BTWC also needs to be strengthened with a verification mechanism."

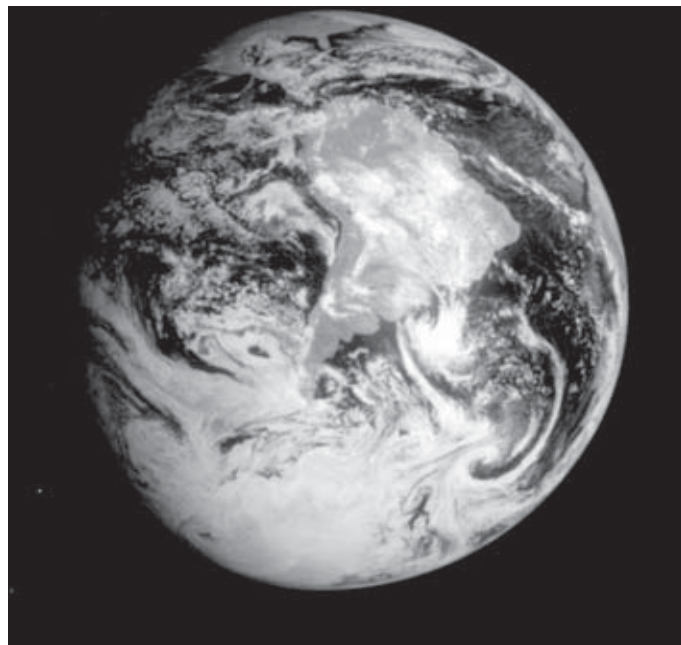
Canada promoted its working paper, "An Accountability Framework," which outlines "proposals for enhancing the effectiveness and authority of the BTWC."

Approximately 20 governments addressed chemical weapons and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), but without going into much detail. The few statements mentioning the CWC praised the role it plays in preventing the proliferation of such weaponry to other states or non-state actors such as terrorist groups. Several delegates pointed out that the CWC provides an effective mechanism for the destruction of chemical weapons. Switzerland urged all signatory

countries to "do everything in their power to destroy all their stocks of chemical weapons within the time frame envisaged in the Convention." The CWC sets a 2012 deadline for the destruction of all stockpiles of chemical weapons, and, unlike the BTWC, has a verification mechanism.

The First Committee is scheduled to discuss biological and chemical weapons during the thematic debate on Wednesday, October 11. With the President of the upcoming BTWC Review Conference (Ambassador Masood Khan, Pakistan), this session will provide a platform for in-depth discussions on biological and chemical weapons.

-Lukas Jeuck, NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security (<http://disarm.igc.org>)



### Verification & Transparency, cont.

anism, Nigeria asserted, "will strengthen the Convention," which has a Review Conference scheduled for next month.

-Eric C. Sorensen, NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security (<http://disarm.igc.org>)



## Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)

During the general debate of the First Committee, many governments expressed disappointment at the lack of a substantive outcome document from the July 2006 United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (SALW RevCon). This disappointment was added to the list of failures to reach agreement in various UN disarmament processes.

“The General Assembly should adopt a decision in order to ensure a proper framework for the continuous assessment of the implementation of the Programme of Action, as well as measures to strengthen it,” said Brazil. Because the SALW RevCon did not agree on an outcome, it did not create a follow-up mechanism for implementing the PoA. South Africa confirmed that it would emphasize the need to “maintain the relevance of the consultative process on the implementation of the Programme of Action, in particular the agreed system of the biennial meetings of States” in the annual SALW ‘omnibus’ resolution that it co-authored with Colombia and Japan. Colombia expressed a desire for the resolution to be adopted through consensus.

During the week, Nigeria, Tanzania, the Republic of Korea, Jamaica, Algeria, Cambodia, the Holy See and Thailand, among others, recognized the threat SALW pose to national peace and security, and several addressed the role of SALW in exacerbating conflicts. Cambodia reiterated its “unequivocal commitment to the collection and destruction of SALW in order to cement peace, social security and political stability.” Canada highlighted “the seriousness of the humanitarian impact of the illicit transfer of SALW.”

Thailand was one of several nations to refer to the link between illicit trafficking in SALW, terrorism and transnational organized crime. Mexico, Nigeria, Myanmar (on behalf of ASEAN) and the member states of ECOWAS expressed concern about the transfer of SALW to non-state actors. Mexico also expressed support for measures to regulate arms bro-

kering, civilian possession of small arms and ammunition control.

A few states identified specific areas of work for the First Committee. Among these, Kazakhstan encouraged further international collaboration in order to create legally binding instruments to combat the illicit trafficking of SALW and to ensure the enforcement of UN arms embargoes. The Philippines presented four points that would anchor the implementation of the PoA: international cooperation; promoting a dialogue/culture of peace; the role of civil society; and follow up mechanisms. Switzerland noted that it was “particularly interested in the question of transparency in armaments,” and Turkey, among others, recognized the continued value of the UN arms register: “[t]his tool in hand is, in our view, a very useful mechanism, complementing our work in this field.”

With the recent failure of the SALW RevCon, it is encouraging to see that member states desire to move forward and that they see in this 61st session an opportunity to make progress in the fight against the illicit trade in SALW.

-Youla Pompilus-Toure, Quaker UN Office (<http://www.quno.org>)

### CTBT, cont.

not be in the interest of the North Korean people.” Although strongly opposed to a nuclear test in the DPRK, the United States did not mention the CTBT. It has not made a statement regarding the CTBT to the First Committee since 2003, when the delegation asserted that “the United States does not support the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and will not become a party to that Treaty.” The United States also failed to mention their own subcritical nuclear weapons testing, the last one of which was conducted in August 2006.

-Jennifer Leigh Schwerer, NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security (<http://disarm.igc.org/index.php>)





## Terrorism

During the First Committee's general debate, the majority of member states identified the potential threat of international terrorism as a key issue. Through a variety of avenues, most delegates focused on the possible acquisition by non-state actors of different types of weapons.

Aside from expressing their support for UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004), which requires all states to both establish domestic controls and adopt legislative measures to prevent non-state actors from acquiring and using weapons of mass destruction, several member states also welcomed the adoption, on September 8, 2006, of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy by the General Assembly. The European Union (EU), in a statement delivered by Finland, pointed out that the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy acts as "an important instrument and expression of international solidarity in the fight against terrorism."

China called for a complete implementation of Resolution 1540 to properly counter the threats of nuclear terrorism; promoted the signing and ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism; and encouraged the implementation of the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities.

The EU also urged UN member states to "reach a speedy consensus on the UN Comprehensive Anti-Terrorism Convention," in accordance with human rights, refugee law and international humanitarian law.

The United States outlined its Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, launched by Presidents Bush and Putin in July of 2006, to improve the accounting and protection of nuclear materials, among other things.

Israel stated that addressing terrorism must be one of the two highest priorities of international peace and security, and said "a special effort" should be made to

prevent terrorist groups from acquiring weapons, and advised "a cautious approach" to arms trades with states supporting terrorism.

Members of the Non-Aligned Movement were more inclined to link the danger of terrorist acquisition of weapons of mass destruction to the danger of the weapons themselves. Noting other states' concern over terrorists or rogue states acquiring nuclear weapons, Indonesia noted that "these catastrophic devices are dangerous in anyone's hands, including in the hands of nuclear weapon states."

Bangladesh remarked that "nuclear weapon states, instead of disarmament, are acquiring more precision capability to the existing stockpiles as well as developing new types of weaponry. Such developments will only make these weapons more attractive to the terrorists for acquisition and use, bringing havoc for all of us."

According to Brazil "the only real guarantee against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is their total elimination." The New Agenda Coalition (NAC), in its statement delivered by Egypt, emphasized that "despite efforts by the international community and others, vast amounts of nuclear material world-wide remain susceptible to theft and diversion."

On biological terrorism, New Zealand stated that "the threat of terrorist acquisition and use of biological agents for malicious purposes," among other concerns, necessitated a comprehensive review of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and its implementation at next month's Review Conference. The Canadian delegation also reiterated the necessity of reaffirming and reinforcing the Treaty's core prohibition against biological weapons in order to prevent terrorist groups from acquiring them.

Jamaica, which has been negatively affected by the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, said, "[g]overnments, including those in manufacturing countries, have a responsibility to ensure that weapons and ammunitions where legally acquired, are not

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## Missiles

A small number of member states discussed missiles in their general statements this week. The European Union, Australia, Kazakhstan, Libya, Morocco, Republic of Korea, Turkey and Eritrea voiced their support for the Hague Code of Conduct (HCOC) against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Adopted in 2002, the HCOC is a politically binding code curbing ballistic missiles and their development, testing and deployment and is intended to supplement the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Turkey supports the HCOC and believes “it constitutes a practical step towards an internationally accepted legal framework in this field...[and] wish[es] to see the universalization of this endeavour.”

Established in 1987, the MTCR is a group of 34 states interested in the nonproliferation of missiles and related technologies. The Republic of Korea said export control regimes like Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) should be strengthened, and the Hague Code of Conduct should be strengthened in the area of means of delivery.

The ASEAN group, in a statement delivered by Myanmar, referenced the urgent need for a comprehensive, multilaterally negotiated, universal and non-discriminatory agreement on missile proliferation, which Myanmar has called for in the last few sessions of the First Committee.

The European Union (EU) referenced the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) recent ballistic missile test in the summer of 2006, stating that “the EU condemns the provocative missile test-launches performed by the government of the DPRK in July 2006 and calls upon the DPRK to re-establish the moratorium on long-range missile testing.” No one took the floor to speak out about the testing and development of the Russian Topol - M missile or the US missile development system and Minuteman III missile test launches from Vandenberg Air Force Base.

In response to the DPRK's announcement on 3 October that the country intends to conduct a nuclear

test, the EU, Republic of Korea and Japan urged implementation of Security Council Resolution 1695, which demanded the DPRK suspend all related activities and required States to not trade goods that could fuel Pyongyang's missile or weapons of mass destruction programmes, and to return without precondition to the Six Party Talks.

First Committee work on missiles has been somewhat predictable over the last few years. Perhaps recent missile testing by the DPRK and other countries will create a renewed sense of urgency regarding this issue.

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



## Landmines

Fewer governments have addressed landmines during the 2006 First Committee general debate than did in previous years. Most statements: urged universalization of the Ottawa Convention on the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personal Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine Ban Treaty); reported on regional mine destruction and clearance; and called for continued financial assistance to mine-clearing operations and victim rehabilitation.

As the Under-Secretary General for Disarmament Affairs noted, landmine and other conventional weapon-caused casualties have been devastating, particularly in conflict-ridden regions such as Africa and the Middle East. He added that these weapons are difficult to control because “[t]here are also powerful economic interests that promote the continued production and export of such weaponry”.

Thailand and Bangladesh also spoke of the humanitarian impact of landmines and the scarcity of resources for mine clearing. Thailand emphasized “the importance of international assistance to mine-affected countries with limited capacity for them to overcome the serious threat of landmine and enable their people to live free from fear. The importance lies not only in assistance in stockpile destruction and mine clearance, but also in humanitarian assistance provided to mine victims and their families.”

In their statement, delivered by Lesotho, the Southern African Development Community said Africa remains the most heavily mined continent, impeding its economic recovery. SADC therefore supports the full implementation and universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty, to which all its members are party.

As the current chair of the Meeting of States Parties, Australia said it has initiated a universalization strategy and intends to reintroduce a resolution on landmines in this year’s First Committee.

The Mine Ban Treaty only covers antipersonnel mines. With regard to mines other than antipersonnel

mines, Switzerland supported efforts to develop a legal instrument that “would provide better protection of civil populations against these terrible weapons,” through discussions within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) framework.

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



## Terrorism, cont.

diverted to criminals to fuel transnational crime or to arm terrorist groups.”

- Courtney Gugliuzza, Reaching Critical Will ([www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org)), and  
- Alessandra Miraglia, NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security ([www.disarm.igc.org](http://www.disarm.igc.org))