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Reaching Critical Will | A programme of the
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Reaching Critical Will

EDITORIAL: DEFINING THE DISARMAMENT AGENDA

Beatrice Fihn | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

As the last speaker under the nuclear weapons cluster, Ambassador Laggner of Switzerland took the floor in a completely silent conference room to read out a strong statement on behalf of 34 members and one observer state, all deeply concerned about the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and eager to see intensified efforts to outlaw these weapons.

"If such weapons were to be used, be it intentionally or accidentally, immense humanitarian consequences would be unavoidable. As the ICRC has already concluded, international organisations providing emergency relief would be unable to fulfill their mandates. In addition to the immediate fatalities, survivors of the horrendous effects of a nuclear explosion would endure immeasurable suffering", these 35 countries stated.

Humanitarian concern is a topic that has grown in importance for disarmament negotiations. No longer are the traditional perspectives of "military utility" and "strategic stability" the only voices at the table. Rather, the human impacts of weapon systems and the objective of the protecting civilians are gaining an increasingly larger role in disarmament discussions, including the nuclear weapons debate.

This humanitarian focus was impossible to ignore for anyone attending First Committee last week. Beginning with the 35-country statement on humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, the thematic debates quickly moved into the conventional weapons, where reducing armed violence, increasing human security, and promoting sustainable development were central issues for most speakers.

During the conventional weapons discussion, the failure of the negotiating conference in July to adopt an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was the main topic. Almost all speakers expressed disappointment that an agreement could not be reached and a clear majority strongly emphasized the importance of rapidly concluding an ATT that prevents illicit and irresponsible arms trade from causing human suffering, armed violence, and violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law.

As the representative of CARICOM noted, "We, the Member States of the United Nations, must represent the desire of millions of people who wish to live in societies free from the scourge of armed violence and armed conflict. The losses due to the ills perpetrated by those who use illegal weapons are not only social and economic in nature, but also human and psychological."

In addition, several delegations expressed grave concerns with the recent use of cluster munitions by the Syrian armed forces and called for an immediate

stop of the use of such indiscriminate weapons and to conduct emergency clearance to protect the civilian population.

It is obvious that even a traditional disarmament forum such as the UN General Assembly has changed focus from a narrow, state-centered, national security perspective to a wider human security one. And it's evident that growing concerns about humanitarian impact of weapons leads to progressive change.

Last week, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) celebrated its 20th anniversary. The achievements of the campaign in its work to ban anti-personnel landmines has been a strong testimony that significant disarmament achievements can become reality if driven by a humanitarian focus. As a part of this anniversary, Human Rights Watch organized a "Humanitarian Disarmament Campaigns Summit," which brought together organizations and campaigns working on landmines, cluster munitions, nuclear weapons, explosive weapons, the arms trade, small arms, uranium weapons, and robot arms, to discuss how to move humanitarian disarmament issues forward.

The summit issued a communiqué (see page 21) that called on "all actors to stay focused on making existing humanitarian disarmament treaties work and use every opportunity to advance international law and practice to prevent harm to civilians."

Humanitarian disarmament is a key issue for civil society actors, who consistently try to prevent further civilian casualties, avoid socio-economic devastation, and protect and ensure the rights of survivors.

So as the last week of the thematic discussions at the First Committee begins, it's important for governments and delegations to not only acknowledge and express concerns over humanitarian harm of weapons, but also to seriously consider how to most efficiently prevent such harm.

Progress on many areas is urgently needed. We need to conclude a strong Arms Trade Treaty with a clear humanitarian and human rights goal; we need to stop the use of explosive weapons in populated areas; we need to prevent any further use of landmines and cluster munitions; and we need to negotiate a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

The continued stalemate and blockage of disarmament negotiations inside the UN system is not acceptable. If the existing machinery and rules of procedures cannot adequately address the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, arms trade, explosive weapons, or military spending, we must look elsewhere to make progress. •

NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Last Monday morning began with a joint statement read by Ambassador Laggner of Switzerland on behalf of 34 member states and one observer state expressing deep concern with the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that any use of nuclear weapons would have. The statement argued that as long as nuclear weapons continue to exist they will threaten the survival of humanity. Furthermore, the perceived political value and prestige attached by some states to these weapons encourages proliferation. The 35 governments issued concern that “the threat of nuclear annihilation remains part of the 21st century international security environment” and called on all states to “intensify their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.”

This powerful joint statement may have concluded the thematic debate on nuclear weapon issues but it will set the stage for renewed action on achieving disarmament. It must be borne in mind as delegations consider and begin to take action on draft resolutions this week.

Once again, nuclear disarmament or nuclear weapon issues are the subject of several draft resolutions tabled at this First Committee. Most of these texts remain the same from year to year, though this year the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) tabled a new resolution: A/C.1/67/L.19, “High-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”.

This draft text calls for a one-day high-level plenary meeting to be convened on 26 September 2013 “to contribute to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament.” It encourages member states to participate “at the highest level” and indicates civil society involvement. Finally, it requests the President of the General Assembly to prepare a summary of the outcome of the meeting.

Such a meeting could potentially help shine a spotlight on nuclear disarmament as an urgent, priority issue for the international community, which would be beneficial. However, it will need to result in a tangible outcome in order to add any value to the multiple fora currently available for discussion on this topic.

Meanwhile, the other nuclear disarmament resolutions continue to address the ongoing failure to make concrete progress on this issue.

Last year, the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) updated its annual resolution, “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments” to sharpen its demand for action on the key commitments and obligations of the nuclear weapon states (NWS). The text is oriented towards expressing the expectation of the majority of governments for concrete progress on nuclear disarmament during the 2015 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review cycle.

Most changes to this year’s text, A/C.1/67/L.13, are cosmetic, though the co-sponsors have made a few substantive updates. The preamble has expanded text on the importance of nuclear weapon free zones, calling for withdrawal of reservations to protocols. The preambular paragraph on New START is updated to acknowledge the ongoing implementation efforts by Russia and the United States and to encourage “deeper reductions in their nuclear arsenals, addressing deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons, both strategic and non-strategic, regardless of their location.” The paragraph on the first preparatory committee of 2015 NPT review cycle is updated to welcome the results.

In the operative portion of the text, operative paragraph (OP) 8 on fissile materials has been expanded to urge the NWS “to initiate and accelerate the development of multilateral arrangements for placing such material, including weapons-grade uranium and plutonium, under verification by the International Atomic Energy Agency and to make arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, and calls upon all States to support, within the context of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the development of appropriate nuclear disarmament verification capabilities and legally binding verification arrangements, thereby ensuring that such material remains permanently outside military programmes in a verifiable manner.” OP 16 from last year’s version has been deleted. This paragraph called upon the NWS to report on their efforts to diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in military and security concepts.

There are many similarities between the NAC’s resolution and Japan’s “United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons,” A/C.1/67/L.49—both call for universality of the NPT, reaffirm the unequivocal undertaking by the NWS to disarm, and recognize the importance of the 2010 Review Conference’s recognition of the devastating humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and the need for compliance with international humanitarian law, for example. However, L.49 expresses less concern with the lack of progress on multilateral nuclear disarmament and is not as emphatic about encouraging the NWS to implement their obligations. Of any of the omnibus disarmament resolutions, this draft has in recent years drawn the most support, including from the NWS.

Malaysia’s resolution A/C.1/67/L.9, “Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons,” contains no changes from last year. The resolution underlines the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice and calls for immediate negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention.

There is also no change to the NAM's resolution "Nuclear disarmament," A/C.1/67/L.50. The draft lists NAM's disarmament priorities including a halt to qualitative improvements in warheads and delivery systems, diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines, establishment of nuclear weapon free zones, de-alerting, a legally-binding instrument against the first use of nuclear weapons, a fissile materials cut-off treaty, the establishment by the Conference on Disarmament of an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, and the convening of an international conference on nuclear disarmament.

Other nuclear weapon-related resolutions

The Indian delegation tabled its two annual resolutions, "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" (A/C.1/67/L.25) and "Reducing nuclear danger" (A/C.1/67/L.27). Neither text has substantive updates from last year. L.26 underlines that the use of nuclear weapons poses the most serious threat to humankind's survival and highlights the 1996 advisory opinion of the ICJ. The draft reiterates the need for an international convention on the prohibition of use of nuclear weapons and requests the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations in order to reach such an agreement. L.27 calls for review of nuclear doctrines and for urgent steps to reduce the risks of unintentional and accidental use of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution also requests the UN Secretary-

General to intensify efforts and support initiatives that would implement the seven recommendations of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters that would significantly reduce the risk of nuclear war.

Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, and Switzerland tabled for the fourth time their draft resolution on "Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems," A/C.1/67/L.28.

Changes in the preamble include welcoming "steps taken by some States in nuclear disarmament" rather than welcoming their steps "to enhance the environment to support further reductions in nuclear weapons". L.28 also changes the former OP 1, which welcomes the 2010 NPT action plan commitment regarding engaging on the issue of de-alerting, into a preambular paragraph and adds a new paragraph acknowledging the continued dialogue among the NWS and the "potential of this process for leading to deeper engagement on nuclear disarmament and greater mutual confidence."

The new OP 1 welcomes the opportunities provided by the 2015 NPT review cycle to address the further reduction of operational status of nuclear weapon systems and looks forward to NWS reporting on this issue to the 2014 preparatory committee. The operative text continues to call for further practical steps on de-alerting. •

THE HUMANITARIAN DIMENSION OF NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

John Burroughs | Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy

Thirty-four countries, plus the Holy See, signed on to the "Joint Statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament" delivered on 22 October by Ambassador Benno Laggner of Switzerland. Signatories are from Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Asia, Central Asia, and the Pacific. Among the eight European signatories are three members of NATO: Denmark, Iceland, and Norway.

The Joint Statement follows on to the similar statement made by 16 countries at the 2012 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee (PrepCom). It differs from the previous statement mainly by reflecting the UN General Assembly (UNGA) setting. The Final Document of the 1978 UNGA First Special Session on Disarmament as well as the NPT Preamble is cited. And in closing, instead of referring to the NPT review cycle, the Joint Statement observes: "The catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons concern the community of States as a whole. Accordingly, the [UNGA] has a particularly important role in addressing this matter in a comprehensive fashion."

The lead point in the statement concerns nuclear explosions' "immense humanitarian consequences," both immediate and long-term, reaching beyond direct fatalities to adverse effects on populations, agriculture, natural resources, climate, and possibly future generations. Also recorded is the inability to provide emergency relief. Those matters will be the subject of a conference to be held in Oslo by the Norwegian government in March 2013, as Ambassador Geir Pedersen noted on 12 October.

The statement also observes that "the utility of these weapons of mass destruction in confronting traditional security challenges has been rightly questioned," and that "nuclear weapons are useless in addressing current challenges such as poverty, health, climate change, terrorism or transnational crime."

The statement further says that "all rules of international humanitarian law [IHL] apply fully to nuclear weapons, notably the rules of distinction, proportionality and precaution as well as the prohibition on causing superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering and the prohibition against causing widespread, severe and

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long-term damage to the environment.” It then quotes the position set forth in the November 2011 resolution of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, namely that it is “difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of [IHL].”

The assertion that “*all* rules of [IHL] apply *fully* to nuclear weapons” (emphasis added) effectively rejects efforts by the Western nuclear weapon states to carve out exceptions for nuclear weapons with respect to some of the key rules stated in the principal modern instrument of IHL, the 1977 Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, as well as to certain crimes set forth in the 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The reference to the prohibition of causing widespread, severe, and long-term damage to the environment reflects the entrenchment of that rule in international law since it was first enunciated in Protocol I.

The NPT PrepCom version of the statement elicited this response from the United States: “We of course strongly agree that all states must ‘comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law,’ as stated in the 2010 Action Plan. A serious analysis of the legality of a hypothetical use of nuclear weapons would have to consider the precise circumstances of that use, and cannot be evaluated in the abstract.” It remains to be seen whether the initiative will stimulate reviews going beyond this rote response to breach the cone of silence that states with nuclear arsenals have erected to protect ‘nuclear deterrence’

from the requirements of IHL. (On US silence, see the remarks of former West Point professor Gary Solis at an April 2012 American Bar Association event at <http://lcn.org/events/ABA-2012.htm>.)

The Joint Statement’s final point is that it “is of utmost importance that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances.... All States must intensify their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.” The statement’s chain of reasoning runs from the risk of catastrophic consequences, the disutility of nuclear weapons, and their incompatibility with IHL to the imperatives of prohibition and elimination. It does not explicitly challenge the lawfulness of possessing nuclear weapons.

However, doing so is not such a far step, as is illustrated by a working paper for the 2012 NPT PrepCom submitted by the Group of Non-Aligned States Parties to the NPT. It states that the Group “believes that the mere possession of nuclear weapons is inconsistent with the principles of [IHL].” The 2011 Vancouver Declaration, developed by civil society groups and signed by former judges of the International Court of Justice and prominent international lawyers, also raises the question of lawfulness of possession. It states: “It cannot be lawful to continue indefinitely to possess weapons which are unlawful to use or threaten to use, are already banned for most states, and are subject to an obligation of elimination.” •

NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

Beatrice Fihn | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

This year, four resolutions on non-proliferation have been put forward, without any significant changes.

The Arab Group’s annual resolution on “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East” (A/C.1/67/L.2) is nearly identical to previous years, with only small technical updates. The resolution focuses mainly on Israel and was adopted with a vote of 165-6-5 last year. The countries abstaining and voting against the resolution usually criticize it of failing to address the full scope of proliferation issues in the region.

Another annual resolution is “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction” (A/C.1/67/L.26), which urges states to participate in international efforts to prevent WMD terrorism and calls for the UN Secretary-General to produce a report on measures undertaken by international organizations and views of member states on the subject. The resolution contains no substantive changes from last year.

The biennial resolution “Preventing the acquisition by terrorists of radioactive sources” (A/C.1/67/L.39) calls for states to support international efforts to prevent the acquisition and use by terrorists of radioac-

tive materials and sources. It contains a few updated references to recent meetings and activities by governments and international organizations, but includes no substantive changes. The resolution is expected to be adopted without a vote as in previous years.

Finally, “Preventing and combating illicit brokering activities” (A/C.1/67/L.24) is another biennial resolution that applies both to conventional weapons and WMD. It argues that illicit brokering of all types of arms will undermine international peace and security and recalls UN Security Council resolution 1540, particularly its implications for border controls and law enforcement, and recognizes international efforts to prevent and combat illicit nuclear trafficking. This year, operational paragraph 5 on international cooperation and assistance, capacity-building, and information-sharing in preventing and combating illicit brokering activities includes a new sentence that encourages member states to take appropriate measures, consistent with international law. In 2010, the resolution was adopted with a vote of 183-1-1, with Iran abstaining and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea voting no. •



NUCLEAR WEAPON AND WMD FREE ZONES

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

As discussion shifted away from nuclear weapons in the third week of First Committee, attention afforded to the issue of nuclear weapon free zones (NW-FZs) waned considerably. Nevertheless, during the debate on “other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs),” several delegates continued to stress the importance of holding the 2012 conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other WMD in the Middle East (MEWMDFZ). Mr. Bouchaib Eloumni of Morocco described the upcoming conference as “a historic opportunity to ensure the Middle East is free from all WMDs in a sustainable manner.” Similarly, Switzerland’s delegate characterized the conference as “an important step for the universalization of the respective disarmament and nonproliferation regimes as well as for the affirmation of the correspondent international norms.”

The Qatari delegation censured Israel as “the main obstacle to achieving the goal of riding the Middle East of the ... threat of nuclear weapons.” In this context, Qatar warned that unless Israel accedes to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and subject its nuclear facilities to international inspection, “there is no possibility” of establishing a MEWMDFZ. The representative of the Arab Group also urged Israel to join the NPT and subject its nuclear arsenal to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards.

Within the past week, delegations have submitted five draft resolutions dealing explicitly with NWFZs. Egypt tabled A/C.1/67/L.1 on the “Establishment of a Middle East NWFZ,” with only minor technical updates from the previous version, which was adopted in 2011 without a vote. As Israel indicated in its explanation of vote last year, it joined consensus on the resolution, despite reservations concerning certain elements contained within it, because it is “committed to a vision” of a MEWMDFZ.

Nigeria introduced draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.55 on the African Nuclear Weapons Free-Zone Treaty. It calls on all relevant states to adhere to the provisions of the Pelindaba Treaty and to sign and ratify it at an early date. There exists little difference between this year’s resolution and that of last year, which was adopted as 66/23 without a vote. However, L.55 welcomes the convening of the First Conference of States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba, which took place in November 2010, and notes with anticipation the Second Conference of States Parties scheduled for November 2012.

A resolution on Mongolia’s international security and nuclear-weapon-free status (A/C.1/67/L.40) was also introduced. Once again, this resolution does not significantly differ from its previous draft from 2010, which was adopted without a vote. The current draft does, however, welcome the declarations of 17 Sep-

tember 2012 by Mongolia and the five nuclear-weapon states on Mongolia’s nuclear-weapon-free status, which it hails as “a concrete contribution to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the enhancement of confidence ... in the region.”

The draft resolution on Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (CANWFZ), A/C.1/67/L.4/Rev.1, welcomes the 2009 entry into force on the Treaty on a CANWFZ. When it was last tabled in 2010, it was adopted as resolution 65/49 with a vote of 144-3-36. Explaining its vote against the 2011 resolution on behalf of the UK and the US, France asserted that it supports the objective of a NWFZ in Central Asia, but there remains “several outstanding issues ... (particularly with regards to Article XII of the new Treaty) whose resolution ... would be necessary to make further progress toward our respective accession to the Treaty’s protocol.” Few substantive changes were made to this year’s draft resolution; however, the updated version welcomes the convening of “three consultative meetings of states parties to the Treaty on a CANWFZ” which took place in 2009, 2011, and 2012, as well as “the adoption of an action plan of the States parties to the Treaty on a CANWFZ to strengthen nuclear security,” among other things.

A final resolution introduced last week that directly concerns NWFZs is A/C.1/67/L.45, entitled “Nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere and adjacent areas.” This resolution was last tabled by Brazil and New Zealand in 2010, when it was adopted as resolution 65/58 with a vote of 174-3-6. As with the 2011 CANWFZ resolution vote, the 2010 vote on this text saw the US, the UK, and France voting against it. In a joint statement explaining their decision, the three states expressed concern over the resolution’s ambiguity, questioning whether “the real goal of this draft is in fact the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone covering the high seas.” Similar to the 2010 version of the resolution, this year’s text calls upon “all states to continue to work together in order to facilitate adherence to the protocols to NWFZ treaties by all relevant states that have not yet done so.” The updated draft resolution, however, welcomes recent positive developments, such as “the ratification by the Russia Federation of Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Pelindaba” as well as “the steps taken by US towards the ratification of the Protocols to the Treaty of Pelindaba and the Treaty of Rarotonga.” In addition, and unlike in the 2010 version, nuclear weapons states are called upon to “withdraw any ... interpretive declarations contrary to the object and purpose of the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free-zones.” •

NUCLEAR TESTING

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

In the third week of this year's First Committee, a draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) (A/C.1/67/L.43) was tabled, which has been co-sponsored so far by 74 states. Last year's version was adopted as resolution 66/64 with a vote of 175-1-3. The DPRK voted against the 2011 resolution, while India, Mauritius, and Syria abstained. L.43 calls for an end to nuclear tests, urges universal ratification

of the CTBT, and underscores the cardinal importance of entry into force of the CTBT. The text deviates in no way from the 2011 resolution except when welcoming the Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT that was adopted at the Ministerial Meeting in New York on 27 September 2012, and the recent ratification of Indonesia and Guatemala and signature by Niue of the Treaty. •

NEGATIVE SECURITY ASSURANCES

Aarushi Prakash | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

A group of 21 countries tabled the resolution "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/67/L.52), reaffirming their interest in negative security assurances (NSAs) for non-nuclear weapon states. The draft tabled this year is identical to the 2011 resolution, which was adopted by a vote of 119-0-57. There are only a few technical updates from last year's version.

The resolution highlights five main issues. It reaffirms the need to reach an early agreement on an international arrangement on NSAs; notes that NSAs are included in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament (CD); asserts that there is a need for all nuclear weapon states to work towards a common approach to NSAs and include such a provision in a legally-bind-

ing instrument; recommends that intensive efforts be devoted to the search for a common approach to ensure NSAs; and recommends the CD to commence negotiations and reach an early agreement to conclude an effective agreement.

Amongst the 57 countries that abstained the resolution last year, the delegations of Japan and the United States provided explanations of their votes. Japan's delegation said it did not wish to "prejudge" the discussions or activities on this issue in the CD, which has not adopted a programme of work since 1998, while the US delegation argued it supported the establishment of a working group on NSAs in the CD but did not support the resolution text as written. Since no changes in the text have been made, it is reasonable to expect a similar voting result this year. •

OUTER SPACE

Beatrice Fihn | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

The thematic debate on outer space focused on two main developments: the recently convened Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) and the draft international code of conduct proposed by the European Union (EU).

The chair of the GGE, Mr. Victor Vasiliev of Russia, briefed the First Committee on the first session held in July. He noted that the session took stock of recent changes of the political environment. In particular, the GGE considered basic principles in space, operational measures to enhance coordination, and consultative mechanisms. He encouraged governments not participating in the GGE as well as academia and civil society to submit written input. Almost all speakers welcomed the GGE and looked forward to its concluding report.

Australia's delegation highlighted that while it is not a member of this GGE, it is contributing to the work

through a substantive submission on the application of the broad range of existing international law to the space domain. Australia argued that greater clarity on interpreting existing international law would be a useful basis on which to develop new TCBMs.

The United States welcomed the GGE and believed it provides a "significant opportunity" to explore "pragmatic, voluntary, effective, and timely TCBMs". Japan's delegation hoped it would produce a "forward-looking" outcome that can accommodate the interests of all "responsible" UN member states, while the delegate from the Republic of Korea hoped that the GGE would demonstrate tangible progress in TCBMs in outer space. Belarus' delegation welcomed the activities of the GGE.

While discussing the contribution to transparency and confidence that the GGE could provide, Mr. Vasiliev of Russia argued that TCBMs will not substitute efforts

to prevent an arms race in outer space, which was echoed by the Chinese delegation. Brazil's delegation likewise noted that while TCBMs can foster mutual understanding, political dialogue, and cooperation, they are not legally-binding and their implementation relies basically on states' political commitment and goodwill.

The second main development in the outer space field this year has been the announcement of a process towards an international code of conduct for outer space activities. The EU elaborated on the proposed international code of conduct, and argued the draft is guided by three main principles: freedom for all to use space for peaceful purposes; preservation of security and integrity of space objects; and due consideration for the legitimate security and defense needs of states.

The EU highlighted that the draft code will not include any provisions concerning the placement of weapons in outer space, but will contribute to preventing space from becoming an area of conflict. In terms of process for moving forwards, the EU announced that it will hold a first multilateral expert meeting to discuss the draft code in the near future, "possibly in January 2013". The representative of the EU argued that it would give all UN member states an opportunity to exchange views, ask for clarification, and present possible new ideas.

The code received attention from most speakers, and delegates of the US, France, Japan, Australia, Republic of Korea, Belarus, and Kazakhstan welcomed the draft. Ambassador Kennedy of the US believed the draft code is a "good foundation" and could provide guidelines for responsible behavior in space.

Japan believed the code is a realistic and constructive multilateral measure, and called for wide participation in the multilateral process, especially from other Asian countries. Australia highlighted that it has been involved in deliberations to develop this code and encouraged others to constructively engage as well. While recognizing that the code will not be a "silver bullet to solve all issues related to space security," the Australian delegation believed it will be a valuable, practical, and achievable step forward.

The Republic of Korea expressed its expectation that the code will be "universal, pragmatic and flexible" and

be able to ensure greater safety in outer space. Belarus welcomed the code and believed it is an important contribution to strengthening confidence.

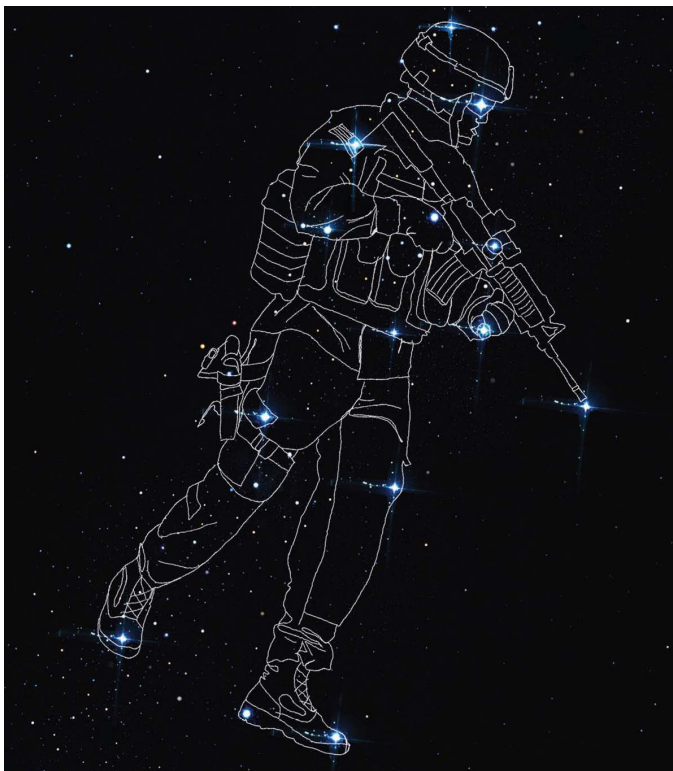
However, the representative of Brazil pointed out that the draft text deals primarily with peaceful uses of outer space and "does not fully cover the complexities of space security." The Brazilian delegate also emphasized that the current draft contains one element that presented a serious difficulty, the reference to self-defence. He argued that it could be interpreted "in a way that justifies the use of force in outer space. "That is a scenario we cannot afford to contemplate, not even in theory." Neither China nor Russia commented on the code of conduct.

The annual draft resolution on the "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/67/L.3) was submitted by Egypt and Sri Lanka. The text only includes technical updates from last year, when it was adopted with only two countries abstaining, United States and Israel.

The resolution recognizes the need for a legally-binding treaty to prevent an arms race in outer space and calls for the Conference on Disarmament to establish a working group on this topic.

The resolution will most likely receive the same voting result this year, as the US in its statement on outer space once again noted that it would only be willing to consider space arms control proposals and concepts if they are "equitable, effectively verifiable, and enhance the national security of the United States and our allies", and added that the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space (PPWT) or any other proposal made "does not yet meet these criteria".

None of the resolutions on disarmament machinery has any particular consequences for the issue of space in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The annual resolution on the CD report (A/C.1/67/L.33) calls for the CD to agree on a programme of work, which would include a working group on space. However, it does not yet appear likely that the CD would be able to commence substantive work on outer space or any of its other core issues in its 2013 session. •



MISSILES AND ANTI-MISSILE SYSTEMS

Aarushi Prakash | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

During the third week of the First Committee, Australia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Ireland, Norway, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), mentioned missiles or anti-missile systems in their statements.

Missiles

The Irish delegation indicated its support for the work of the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOG), stating, "The proliferation of ballistic missiles represents a threat to international peace and security both in its own right and as potential means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction." The Norwegian delegation called for the full universalization of the HCOG and the Australian delegation indicated its commitment to non-proliferation by supporting international arrangements for establishing global best practice controls on the export of ballistic missile technologies.

A biennial resolution on "The Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missiles" (A/C.1/67/L.23) was also tabled. The resolution recalls that the proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, as recognized by the Security Council in its resolution 1540 (2004) and subsequent resolutions, constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

The resolution also welcomes work towards universalization of the Code and underlines the ongoing progress to enhance transparency and confidence-building among states through pre-launch notifications and annual declarations. The resolution also encourages deepening the relationship between the Code and the UN.

While most changes are only technical, the resolution affirms that to date, 134 states have so far subscribed to the code as compared to the 131 states from 2010. In 2010, this resolution was adopted as resolution 65/73 with 162 in favour, 17 abstentions, and one (Iran) opposed.

A draft decision entitled "Missiles" (A/C.1/67/L.7) was presented by the Islamic Republic of Iran, Egypt, and Indonesia, and remains unchanged since 2009. The decision simply decides to place the issue on the agenda for the sixty-eighth session. This decision has always been adopted without a vote.

Anti-missile systems

The NAM expressed its concern over the deployment of strategic missile defense systems, noting that potential consequences could lead to an arms race and further modernization of missile systems. The NAM also further reiterated that abrogation of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty has brought new challenges to strategic stability and the work to prevent an arms race in outer space. •

BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Irene Pugnali | NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

Last week, First Committee dealt with the thematic debate on other weapons of mass destruction. Several delegations took the floor to deliver their considerations on biological and chemical weapons, expressing both satisfaction for steps undertaken during past months and disappointment for remaining challenges to address. In certain occasions, real concern was highlighted, particularly regarding the Syrian government's public acknowledgement of the possession of chemical weapons. Another crucial point underscored this week by a number of delegations was the final extended deadline for chemical weapon stockpile destruction that was not met by some possessor states: several delegations reiterated the urgency of complying with the duty of the complete destruction in the shortest time possible.

Moreover, some delegations noted that there is a strict connection between the total destruction and the prevention of the re-emergence of the threat of chemical weapons. The European Union, in particular, argued that the ultimate elimination goes hand-in-hand with preventing the creation of new chemical weapons in the future, further highlighting that "pro-

visions on industry verification, national implementation and challenge inspections are vital for pursuing the non-proliferation goals of the Convention." In this regard, it's worthwhile recalling the remark made by Switzerland, arguing that the relevance and credibility of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) as a disarmament and non-proliferation tool depends on its capacity to cope with the rapid progress in science and technology and, particularly, with the increasing convergence between biology and chemistry.

This matter received little attention in the draft resolution "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction" (A/C.1/67/L.44), sponsored by Poland. Last year's resolution 66/35 was adopted without a vote. In both cases, the text reiterates some fundamental pillars of the CWC, such as, for instance, the importance for possessor states to accede to the Convention and the necessity of implementing the provisions "in a manner that avoids hampering the economic or technological developments of States Parties and international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes

not prohibited under the Convention,” as enshrined in Article XI of the Convention.

However, the two texts differ somewhat. As stressed by Poland, there are two new elements that should be noticed: first, the clause expressing the urgency to eliminate the remaining chemical weapons stockpiles in the shortest time possible and, second, the acknowledgement of the ongoing efforts states have been undertaking with a view to the Third Review Conference of the CWC. Poland admitted that several proposals were discussed but the necessity of setting aside the most controversial questions emerged in order to preserve the full support of all delegations.

Regarding biological weapons, First Committee welcomed the President of the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological and Toxins Weapons Conventions (BTWC), Ambassador Paul van den IJssel. Reiterating his conviction in the importance of the Review Conference as a crucial opportunity for maintaining and improving the BTWC, he also stressed that notable results were achieved, such as, among others: the establishment of a new database and of a sponsorship program for facilitating information sharing and the participation of developing states parties in the meeting of the inter-sessional process; the renewal of the mandate of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU); the adoption by consensus of the Final Declaration and of the inter-sessional work programme; as well as the review of the modalities and forms for information exchange through the annual confidence-building measures (CBMs).

The President outlined the spirit of “ambitious realism” countries should adopt to work fruitfully for the ultimate success of the BTWC since, from his standpoint, the future of the Convention is in member states’ hands. However, apart from the general appreciation for the Seventh Review Conference that delegations shared with Ambassador van den IJssel, a sense of dissatisfaction remains for some countries because of issues which did not find a solution during the Review Conference. Switzerland, for instance, expressed its desire for the BTWC to keep pace with rapid developments in the biological science as well as for strengthening CBM mechanisms if it is to remain the only tool to establish transparency and confidence among states parties. The Russian Federation pointed out that the toughest matters still remaining are the significant disagreement and the weak confidence between states parties.

Concerning this aspect, several delegations reiterated again their willingness to discuss a legally-binding protocol providing a reliable and transparent verification system as the most effective way to enhance the Convention. Even though this challenging element has not been included, the draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.29 sponsored by Hungary encompasses all the relevant outcomes achieved during the Seventh Review Conference, as outlined by Ambassador van den IJssel. The current draft maintains most points in common with last year’s resolution 66/35, which was adopted without a vote. •

DEPLETED URANIUM

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Very few delegations have referred to the issue of depleted uranium (DU) weapons during First Committee this year. It is brought the Committee’s attention biannually through a resolution tabled by the Non-Aligned Movement. This year, it was also the subject of a side event, at which two civil society reports were launched (see *First Committee Monitor* 2012 No. 3).

DU is a by-product left over when natural uranium ore is enriched for use in nuclear reactors and nuclear weapons. It is a toxic, dense metal. If it is ingested or inhaled it creates risks both as a toxic heavy metal and as a radioactive material. DU munitions burn upon impact releasing uranium oxide dust which can be inhaled.

During the thematic debate on conventional weapons, Ambassador Hauge of Norway acknowledged “concerns caused by worrying signs of health and environmental implications in areas where depleted uranium ammunition and armour have been employed.” He argued, “While no clear conclusions can be drawn and further research is needed we feel that these con-

cerns warrant our serious attention. To be on the safe side restraint should be performed concerning the use of depleted uranium in ammunition and armour. Norway supports research to bring more knowledge to this field.”

The NAM’s resolution, “Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium,” A/C.1/67/L.16, only has one change from the 2010 version. It includes a new preambular paragraph, “Recalling that the United Nations Environment Programme, in its report to the Secretary-General on the subject, affirms that major scientific uncertainties persist regarding the long-term environmental impacts of depleted uranium, particularly with respect to long-term groundwater contamination, and calls for a precautionary approach to the use of depleted uranium.”

In its operative portion, the resolution invites member states and relevant international organizations to submit their views on this topic to the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) and requests the UNSG to issue an up-

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dated report reflecting these views. The draft text also requests the UNSG to encourage relevant international organizations to “update and complete, as appropriate, their studies and research on the effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium on human health and the environment.” It encourages member states to facilitate and follow the development of such studies and invites those states that have used DU munitions in armed conflicts “to provide

the relevant authorities of affected States, upon request, with information, as detailed as possible, about the location of the areas of use and the amounts used, with the objective of facilitating the assessment of such areas.”

When this resolution was last addressed by the General Assembly, it was adopted with a vote of 148-4-30. France, Israel, the United Kingdom, and the United States voted against the resolution at that time. •

ARMS TRADE TREATY

Katherine Prizeman | Global Action to Prevent War

As the debate moved into the cluster on conventional weapons, much focus remains on the future of the arms trade treaty (ATT) negotiations and ultimately how the conversation on the establishment of common international standards for the transfer of conventional weapons will progress.

Costa Rica, on behalf of the “co-authors” of the original 2007 ATT resolution (Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Kenya, and the United Kingdom), tabled draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.11, “The arms trade treaty.” The resolution calls for a final conference in March 2013 based upon the same rules of procedure, notably the provision of consensus, as the July 2012 Diplomatic Conference. It seeks to “conclude the work” that could not be finalized in July. The resolution also notes that the President’s draft treaty text from 26 July 2012 will serve as the basis for negotiations “without prejudice to the right of delegations to put forward additional proposals on that text.”

Ambassador Paul van den IJssel of the Netherlands, one of the Vice Presidents of the July negotiating conference, presented the report of the conference. He explained that the four weeks of negotiations yielded “constructive engagement” such that delegations “came close to consensus”. In addition to also noting the important contributions of civil society, Ambassador van den IJssel briefed the First Committee on the work of the two main committees on the various aspects of the treaty—preamble, principles, goals and objectives, and criteria (Main Committee I); scope, implementation, international cooperation and assistance, and final provisions (Main Committee II).

Following the presentation of Ambassador van den IJssel, the vast majority of delegations used their statements during the conventional weapons cluster to reiterate support for completion of work on an ATT as well as for the tabled resolution from the “co-authors” group. Ambassador Helmut Hoffman of Germany, on behalf the major European arms exporters (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, and the UK), presented a communiqué from the Foreign Ministers of these states giving full support to the resolution as a way for-

ward. The United States also reiterated its support for a “short UN conference next spring to continue our efforts to negotiate an effective ATT.”

Other delegations chose to support the resolution, but added caveats. The delegation of the Netherlands stated its intention to propose “limited changes” to the text for further strengthening in March. Ambassador Terje Hauge of Norway said that the draft text “represents a floor that requires improvements of both substantive and technical nature.” He emphasized that the negotiations in 2013 “can only proceed in one direction from this point of departure: Towards a stronger and more robust treaty based on humanitarian values and with a comprehensive scope and strong and binding criteria.”

Some delegates pointed out substantive imperfections of the text—notably the weak treatment of ammunition and parts and components; the lack of clarity on obligations to deny transfers with substantial risk of violation of international humanitarian and human rights law, as well as the lack of public reporting; and enabling gifts, loans, and defense contract transfers to operate outside the treaty’s provisions. The representative of Iceland also pointed out the continued controversy around inclusion of gender-based violence in the treaty’s national risk assessment criteria, urging those delegations that continue to oppose this to “let go of this position of excluding this well-established term.”

The rules of procedure, particularly the provision of consensus, also continued to garner attention. The delegation of Morocco, also a Vice President of the July conference, welcomed the resolution from the “co-authors” and its rules of procedure, noting that the consensus provision is important as it ensures that all views are represented in an equitable manner and is “by no means a tool to block progress or agreement.”

Other delegations did not share this view. The representatives of CARICOM, Mexico, Norway, and Ireland expressed concern and some skepticism over the provision of consensus. During the general debate, Ambassador Jim Kelly of Ireland warned, “If consensus cannot be achieved next March, we must be ready to consider other options in order to ensure that this critically

important new instrument can be adopted without hither delay.” The CARICOM states also reiterated their skepticism over consensus. Ambassador Eden Charles of Trinidad and Tobago stated that consensus cannot result in veto-power of any state that would prevent agreement by consensus of a treaty text that has the support of an overwhelming majority of states. In other words, the July scenario must not be repeated. Likewise, the delegations of Norway and Mexico underscored the limits of the “co-authors” resolution. The Norwegian ambassador stated that his delegation’s skepticism of consensus is well known, but Norway is willing to accept the resolution. The Mexican delegate also highlighted the limits of consensus and agreed that it must not hinder the will of the majority, while supporting the resolution generally as a much-needed clear pathway forward.

There is general consensus that the ATT process must indeed move forward and, despite the skepticism of some delegations around operating under consensus once again, the convening of a final conference in March 2013 under the same rules of procedure is generally accepted as the best path forward. However, as rightly noted by the Irish delegation, if consensus once again prevents adoption of a robust and comprehensive instrument that prevents transfers of conventional arms that violate international humanitarian law, human rights, and otherwise cause human suffering, other pathways must be pursued. The process cannot continue indefinitely. As stated by the ambassador of Costa Rica, “Humanity needs it and demands it. We cannot wait any longer.” •

SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Katherine Prizeman | Global Action to Prevent War

The issue of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) was a main focus of this week’s discussions in the conventional weapons cluster, with much attention paid the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the illicit trade in small arms (UNPoA) and the outcome document adopted at its second Review Conference (RevCon) in September 2012.

The President of the Review Conference, Ambassador Joy Ogwu of Nigeria, was unable to present the report of the Conference, so one of the Vice-Presidents, the representative of Kenya, briefed the First Committee on the results of this year’s review. As noted by the Vice-President, the outcome document was adopted by consensus, to which two substantive annexes were attached to the final, factual report of the Conference. The annexes contained a Declaration, Implementation Plans for the UNPoA as well as the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), and a follow-up mechanism that contains a schedule of meetings for the period of 2012 through 2018. The Vice-President underscored the success of the Conference in reaching consensus, noting it is a “rate feat”. Also highlighted were the acknowledgement of new elements in the outcome document—the links between illicit trade and international humanitarian law, sustainable development, and armed violence; measuring effectiveness of international cooperation and assistance; regional cooperation and its connection to efforts at the global levels; and the role of industry and its expertise in technical developments.

Although the majority of states praised the consensus outcome of the UNPoA RevCon, some delegations again reiterated that more was demanded of the Conference and some would have liked to have seen the document “go farther”. Ambassador Enrique Román-

Morey of Peru, speaking on behalf of the Union of South American Nations, noted that by referring to the issue of the illicit trade in SALW “in all its aspects,” it must necessarily include ammunition and explosives. Moreover, Ambassador Román-Morey stated that the Programme’s non-legally-binding nature remains an obstacle to its effective implementation. Likewise, the delegation of Norway noted that it has long argued that the UNPoA should be converted into a legal instrument.

Ambassador Simon-Michel of France noted his delegation’s disappointment over the inability to strengthen certain aspects of the UNPoA such as the fight against the dissemination of MANPADS as well as incorporation of a gender perspective into its implementation. The delegations of the United States and Lithuania also expressed support for inclusion of a gender perspective into the implementation of the instrument. However, in contrast, the representative of the Arab Group noted, once again, in his conventional cluster intervention that any “new elements” were just proposals subject to further discussion and consensus.

The representative of Lithuania rightly noted that delegations must continuously seek ways to adapt the UNPoA to new challenges. In this same vein, the delegation of Japan called for the identification of specific topics well in advance of future UNPoA meetings to ensure the participation of the most relevant national experts in such gatherings. Likewise, the Mexican representative noted the usefulness of the Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) and Meetings of Governmental Experts (MGE) calling for specific and implementable outcome recommendations from such fora.

Two SALW-related resolutions were tabled this week, both of which are annual resolutions presented at the

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First Committee. The first resolution A/C.1/67/L.21, "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them," presented by Mali on behalf of ECOWAS, is an annual resolution that last year was adopted by the First Committee and the General Assembly without a vote. There is little change from last year's iteration of the resolution with the exception of recalling the outcome of the most recent UNPoA RevCon in September 2012. The text, *inter alia*, encourages governments, civil society organizations, and international organizations to facilitate or support relevant programs and initiatives.

The second resolution A/C.1/67/L.48, "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects," was presented by the delegation of South Africa also on behalf of Colombia and Japan. The resolution, which was adopted last year without a vote, provides technical updates and reflects on the outcome of the second UNPoA RevCon from this year, and maps out the follow-up mechanism as outlined in the outcome document from the RevCon. It decides, pursuant to the

follow-up mechanism, to convene a Biennial Meeting of States in 2014 and 2016, a Meeting of Government Experts in 2015, as well as a one-week preparatory committee prior to the next two-week RevCon to be held in 2018. This year's resolution also includes a new reference to the utility of synchronizing national reporting on the UNPoA, most especially around the follow-up meetings for the instrument.

The UNPoA remains an important tool for combatting the scourge of illicit SALWs and the attention paid to its full and effective implementation is a most welcome part of the First Committee's deliberations. However, its full and effective implementation necessarily requires that states regularly reassess the instrument's ability to respond to the most pressing security challenges related to the illicit trade and diversion of these weapons. Full advantage must be taken of the UNPoA's follow-up mechanism so that these meetings become useful and concrete sessions on how to best treat shifting SALW-related security concerns. •

CLUSTER MUNITIONS AND LANDMINES

Amelie Chayer | International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition

The debate on conventional weapons during First Committee has been marked by many expressions of support for the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, with delegations emphasizing the terrible impact of antipersonnel mines and cluster munitions on civilian populations.

Cluster munitions

The Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom condemned or expressed grave concern with the recent use of cluster munitions by the Syrian armed forces. Japan and Mexico condemned any use of cluster munitions by any actor, the latter saying the use cluster munitions is contrary to the principles of international humanitarian law. Syria exercised its right of reply, criticizing various states that it said are funding the production of cluster munitions, but it did not confirm or deny cluster munitions use.

The European Union expressed support for the humanitarian goals of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and noted the significant progress made on universalization. It explained that it does not differentiate between the types of explosive remnants of war when providing assistance to affected countries. The Non-Aligned Movement recognized the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and expressed sympathy to cluster munition-affected countries. The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) reiterated its "support to the efforts of the international community to regulate cluster munitions" and Ecuador's delegation

offered to share its expertise on stockpile destruction.

Norway's ambassador said the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) demonstrate that it is possible to negotiate multilateral disarmament instruments that strengthen the protection of civilians, when there is a common sense of purpose across traditional groupings and when states make use of the "undisputed expertise and competence of humanitarian organizations." As President of the Third Meeting of States Parties, Norway pledged to focus on the effective implementation and universalization of the Convention and its norms.

France mentioned the instrumental role of civil society in the creation of the CCM and MBT, and called on all states to join both instruments. Lao PDR, the world's most heavily affected state, stressed the importance of full the universalization and implementation of the CCM. Lithuania referred to the humanitarian impact the Convention is already having only two years after its entry into force.

The Netherlands mentioned the recent completion of the destruction of its stockpile of cluster munitions, said it attaches great importance to stopping the suffering caused by these weapons, and called on all states to join the CCM. Switzerland noted its global approach that integrates financial support provided on the cluster munitions and landmine issues, with a view to maximizing impact. Uganda hailed the "significant progress" made in the framework of the convention.



The United Kingdom said the need to rid the world of cluster munitions is as strong today as it has ever been, called on all states to join the convention, and pledged continued financial support for mine action.

Some states not party took the floor. Thailand expressed support for the international effort to ban “certain types of cluster munitions”. Canada noted that its domestic legislation is being considered by the Parliament. Greece expressed disappointment at the failure to agree on a protocol on cluster munitions under the Convention on Conventional Weapons.

Antipersonnel mines

The European Union emphasized its continuous commitment towards the goal of a world free of antipersonnel mines, and explained how it allocates financial support for MBT universalization and implementation. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) said it deplored the use of antipersonnel mines in contravention of international humanitarian law and called upon all states in a position to do so, and especially past users, to provide inter alia assistance for mine clearance and victim assistance. The Arab Group echoed the NAM’s call on past users. The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) reaffirmed the need to eliminate such weapons and hailed the joint mine clearance partnerships between Peru and Ecuador and between Peru and Chile.

Cambodia said antipersonnel mines and explosive remnants of war constitute a major obstacle to socioeconomic development, and indicated that its 2010–2019 national mine action strategy demonstrates its leadership on the issue. Canada noted that some MBT states parties need to complete their overdue stockpile destruction obligations. Japan called for full treaty uni-

versalization and pledged its continued financial support for mine action. Lithuania invited states in a position to do so to provide assistance for clearance, and recalled the treaty obligation to submit annual transparency reports. Mexico reiterated the goal of complete elimination of antipersonnel mines and called on states to implement the commitments made under the 2009 Cartagena Action Plan. It hailed the contribution of civil society in alerting the international community to the humanitarian impact of conventional weapons.

The Netherlands reported contributing 45 million euros for mine action in 2012–2016 and called on all states to join the MBT. Norway stated that it gives high priority to the implementation of the Treaty, indicating that despite the success reached so far on clearance, stockpile destruction, and reduction in casualties, “the job is still not finished.” Switzerland referred to recent allegations of use of antipersonnel mines and called on all actors to renounce use. Thailand said it was committed to fulfilling its treaty obligations including mine clearance. Cuba, a state not party, explained that it needs to balance the humanitarian impact of antipersonnel mines with its national security concerns.

Albania, Cambodia, and Slovenia co-sponsored the resolution on the “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction”, A/C.1/67/L.8. The text contains only technical updates to last year’s version, which was adopted in the General Assembly as resolution 66/29 with a vote of 162 in favour and 18 abstentions. It invites all interested parties to attend the 12th Meeting of States Parties in Geneva, Switzerland, from 3–7 December 2012. •

OTHER CONVENTIONAL WEAPON ISSUES

Katherine Prizeman | Global Action to Prevent War

In addition to discussions on the arms trade treaty (ATT) as well as issues related to small arms and light weapons (SALWs), other conventional weapons issues arose during this week’s discussions. The traditional issues of the Convention on the Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW), information on confidence-building measures in conventional arms, transparency in armaments, and practical disarmament measures were also addressed through the tabling of relevant resolutions.

The opening of the conventional weapons cluster featured a presentation from the delegation of Belarus in the capacity of President of the Fifth Conference of High Contracting Parties to Protocol V of the CCW. Protocol V seeks to prevent the harmful humanitarian

impact of explosive remnants of war (ERW) by obligating High Contracting Parties, which now stand at 80, to record the use and abandonment of explosive ordnances and release this information, which is essential for clearance efforts, as soon as possible after the cessation of active hostilities. The final outcome of the Fifth Conference held in Geneva in November 2011 suggested the President consider reporting to the 67th session of the First Committee on its endeavors to promote universality of the Protocol. The representative of Belarus also noted the Meeting of Experts of Protocol V held in April of this year, highlighting the safe storage of munitions to prevent them from becoming unexploded ordnances.

In this context, the delegation of Sweden presented resolution A/C.1/67/L.12 on the CCW, an annual resolution adopted last year without a vote. The represen-

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tative of Sweden noted the role of the Convention in responding to urgent humanitarian issues through additional protocols and underscored the importance of its universalization. This year's resolution also incorporates references to the outcome of the Fourth Review Conference of the CCW held in November 2011 as well as the experts meeting in April 2012.

The delegation of the Netherlands presented the annual resolution A/C.1/67/L.22 on the UN Register on Conventional Arms, "Transparency in armaments," noting that one of the important features of the UN Register is its regular review through the meeting of Group of Governmental Experts (GGE). This year's iteration of the resolution, which was adopted last year in the First Committee on the whole with a vote of 149-0-25, calls for the postponement of the next GGE until 2013. Ambassador van den IJssel noted that it is important to convene the next GGE after the conclusion of the ATT so that it can effectively reflect on this new instrument in its deliberations. During discussions, the delegations of the EU, the US, and Lithuania also expressed support for the UN Register and called for the inclusion of SALWs as a category.

Other relevant resolutions tabled this week included the annual resolution entitled "Conventional arms control at the regional and sub-regional level" (A/C.1/67/L.53) sponsored by Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Pakistan, Syrian Arab Republic, and United Arab Emirates. The resolution, which remains unchanged this year, was adopted last year by the First Committee as a whole by a vote of 165-1-3. Also tabled were two bi-annual resolutions last adopted in 2010, "Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms" (A/C.1/67/L.36) and "Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures" (A/C.1/67/L.37). The resolution on confidence-building measures (CBMs)

was adopted in 2010 without a vote, as was the resolution on practical disarmament measures. Ambassador Román-Morey of Peru, on behalf of Union of South American Nations, expressed support for the resolution on CBMs, noting their important role for the consolidation of peace and security. This year's resolution follows up on the request included in the 2010 resolution to the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of resolution, in particular the information contained in an electronic database composed of information provided by member states on developments in this field. This year's resolution, "Underscores the conclusions set out in the report of the Secretary-General that most confidence-building measures referred to in national reports by Member States have been agreed in regional and subregional or bilateral contexts and that the great variety of such measures underlines the importance of tailoring them to the particular security concerns of States within a region and subregion." Meanwhile, this year's resolution on practical disarmament measures again underscores the importance of the activities of the Group of Interested States (GIS) in practical disarmament measures, the robust functioning of the Implementation Support System for the UN Programme of Action on small arms, and the role of integrating UN-mandated peacekeeping operations in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs.

These critical issues of conventional weapons clearly draw much of their significance from the many cross-cutting elements such as transparency and other aspects of national reporting through the UN Register, which have a clear and wide-ranging effect on international security. Therefore, these relevant resolutions, whether annual or biannual, must continue to address and remind states of these pressing security issues affecting societies across regions. •

REGIONAL DISARMAMENT AND SECURITY

Aarushi Prakash | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Regional disarmament and security was discussed in the third week of First Committee as a part of an interactive session with the heads of the UN Regional Centers for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), and in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD), as well as the Chief of Regional Disarmament Branch in the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs. In addition, nine draft resolutions related to regional disarmament and security have been tabled at the First Committee.

A/C.1/67/L.47, "Regional disarmament," remains unchanged from last year, when it was adopted without a vote. It includes only a few technical updates of the text.

A/C.1/67/L.51, "Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context" is also unchanged from last year, when it was adopted without a vote. During the general debate, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) reiterated that its member states consider confidence-building measures as an important tool for the consolidation of peace and security.

A/C.1/67/L.53, "Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels," is identical to last year's version, which was adopted with a vote of 165-1-3. India voted against, while Bhutan, Poland, and Russia abstained. As the text remains unchanged, voting patterns will likely remain the same this year.



A/C.1/67/L.6, "Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region," is unchanged from last year when it was adopted without a vote.

A/C.1/67/L.14, "United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament" submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), contains a few minor updates from 2011, when it was adopted as resolution 66/53 without a vote. For example, the 2012 resolution text notes the latest NAM summit and its outcome document that emphasized the importance of United Nations activities at the regional level.

A/C.1.67/L.32, "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific," remains mostly unchanged from its 2011 version, when it was adopted without a vote. It takes note of some recent developments and meetings, but no substantial changes have been made.

During the debate, Thailand expressed its appreciation to UNRCPD for supporting the initiative to organize the upcoming workshop entitled "Building Capacity and Overcoming Language Barriers in SALW Control," scheduled to be held during 11–13 December 2012 in Bangkok. The Head of UNRCPD outlined some of the capacity-building activities that have been held by the Centre, including the strategic planning, aim, and summary of projects and activities.

A/C.1/67/L.38, "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean," also only contained some minor changes from last year's text.

During the thematic discussion, the Head of UNLIREC discussed the achievement the centre has attained in training and capacity-building on issues related to small arms. Mr. Enrique Román-Morey of Peru speaking on behalf of UNASUR reiterated that it is neces-

sary to strengthen South America as a zone of peace by upholding the UNASUR decision to refrain from the threat or the use of force against the territorial integrity of another state in the group. For the purpose of promoting transparency in military expenditure in the region, UNASUR also announced it has launched the South-American Register on Defense Expenditures, compiling for the first time official information by the 12 UNASUR members, based on a common agreed methodology developed.

A/C.1/67/L.57, "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa," contains a only a few technical updates from last year. The Head of UNREC mentioned the list of projects, including capacity-building and training and assessment research, that is undertaken by the centre. He also outlined achievements on improving regional standards and small arms control measures, as well as provisions for better understanding and negotiations around the arms trade treaty (ATT).

A/C.1/67L.59, "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa," contains a number of updates concerning recent events. For example, it takes note of the outcome of the UN negotiating conference on the ATT and also of the Second Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons. It also welcomes the declaration on a road map for counter-terrorism and non-proliferation of arms in Central Africa. In addition, it welcomes the close cooperation established between the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and the Economic Community of Central African States and the signing of a framework of cooperation agreement between the two entities in 2012. •

DISAMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Marie-Capucine Goube | NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

During the past two weeks of thematic debates, only a few member states mentioned development issues as related to disarmament. Some delegations highlighted the link between disarmament and development or the importance of a multilateral approach to resolve those issues, including the major issue of the reallocation of resources from arms expenditure towards development goals.

On the very last day of the general debate, on 16 October, the Nepalese delegation highlighted the "crucial importance" of disarmament "in unleashing valuable resources ... for the cause of development," reminding First Committee of the strong link between disarmament and development. The delegation of Nigeria brought to attention the harmful consequences of military expenditure on the achievement of the Mil-

lennium Development Goals. Niger and Nepal both expressed their concern about the continuing rise of global military expenditure, especially in the context of an economic crisis, since the procurement of arms blocks resources that could otherwise go to important issues such as development activities.

The delegations of Kuwait and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) highlighted the direct influence that nuclear weapon expenditure has on societies. Mr. Abdulaziz Amash Alajmi of Kuwait argued that "power lies in human resources, and in the survival of man [sic], not his extinction," and called for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction "in order to direct the financial resources towards economic, social, humanitarian and political development." On behalf of UNASUR, Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey of Peru

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highlighted UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's argument that "massive military spending and new investments in modernizing nuclear weapons continue to reflect paradigms which are hard to explain twenty years after the end of the Cold War." Thus, he stated, "we join his call upon those States possessing nuclear weapons to cut spending on nuclear weapons, and invest instead in social and economic development."

During the thematic debate on conventional weapons, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) expressed concern about the explosive remnants of the Second World War which continue to cause "human and material damage and obstruct development plans in some Non-Aligned Countries". NAM, as well as Niger, stated that the proliferation, excessive accumulation, and (mis)use of those weapons are not only a threat to international and regional security, but have serious humanitarian and socio-economic consequences too. Many delegations highlighted the same negative impacts on development from the irresponsible and illicit trade in conventional arms, especially small arms and

light weapons and their ammunition.

The comments from these delegations show that the prioritization by states of military might over human security has poor consequences on human beings in two different ways. First, excessive military expenditure leads to and intensifies conflicts and violence resulting in human suffering and undermining development. The second direct consequence of arms expenditure is the massive gap between the resources dedicated to weapons and those dedicated to development, peace, and security.

The Indonesian delegation, on behalf of the NAM, submitted a draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.20, "Relationship between disarmament and development," which is quite similar to the text submitted last year. In this draft resolution, NAM stresses the importance of the "symbiotic relationship" between disarmament and development, and urges member states to rethink their expenditure priorities in order to put an end to the exaggerated sums of money directed into militarism instead of development. •

WOMEN, DISARMAMENT, NON-PROLIFERATION, AND ARMS CONTROL

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

In 2010, the delegation of Trinidad and Tobago introduced a draft resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control. This resolution, which was adopted by consensus as resolution 65/69, recognizes "the valuable contribution of women to practical disarmament measures carried out at the local, national, regional and subregional levels in the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict, and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control." This resolution is a valuable tool for promoting the equitable and effective role of women in disarmament issues and, if further developed, could be a tool for recognizing the gendered impacts of armed violence and armed conflict.

An updated version of this resolution, A/C.1/67/L.35, has been tabled by Trinidad and Tobago and is currently co-sponsored by Australia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, El Salvador, Eritrea, Finland, Guyana, Iceland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Suriname, Sweden, and the United States. The text is still open for co-sponsors and now an annual rather than biannual resolution.

The revised text adds preambular paragraphs recalling relevant women, peace and security (WPS) resolutions; recognizing that the role of women in disarmament should be further developed; and noting the efforts of states "to increase the participation of women in their national and regional coordination mechanisms on disarmament-related matters.

The operative portion of the text has also been up-

dated. OP1 urges member states, regional and subregional organizations, the UN, and specialized agencies to promote "equal opportunities for the representation of women in all decision-making processes with regard to matters related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, in particular as it relates to the prevention and reduction of armed violence and armed conflict."

The revised text also welcomes the efforts of the UN to accord high priority to WPS and takes note of the role of UN Women in promoting the implementation of relevant resolutions. It calls on states to "empower women, including through capacity building efforts, as appropriate, to participate in the design and implementation of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control efforts" and on the UN to assist states in promoting the role of women as above. Finally, the resolution requests the Secretary-General seek member state views on "ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control" and to report back to the next General Assembly session.

While the updates make the resolution more robust and comprehensive, the draft is oddly worded in some respects: it calls on states alone to "empower" women, and then only "as appropriate". It does not contain an explicit reference to UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which is the foundational UN resolution for the WPS agenda. Furthermore, the draft text does



not reflect on the gender dimensions of disarmament and the arms trade. These dimensions are widely recognized as consisting of connections between socialized understandings of masculinity and the use and proliferation of weapons, as well as recognition that women are differently and particularly affected by armed gender-based violence.

The resolution could also stand to be more specific and action-oriented. For example, as suggested in the first edition of this year's Monitor it could urge states to divert human and economic resources currently devoted to armaments to promote gender equality and development including implementation of the Millennium Development Goals; call on those states that have

not yet generated National Action Plans for implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 to do so including incorporation of disarmament goals and indicators and measures to effectively increase the participation by women at all decision-making levels, particularly in institutions and bodies dealing with security and disarmament; and request a report from the UN Secretary-General on this subject.

Monday, 29 October is the annual open debate in the UN Security Council on resolution 1325. Disarmament is a woman, peace and security issue and delegations should include references to disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control in their statements during the open debate. •

DISARMAMENT MACHINERY

Beatrice Fihn | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

The First Committee is running significantly behind schedule this week, and the disarmament machinery debate that was scheduled for Thursday, 25 October will now take place later this week instead.

However, a panel on the disarmament machinery was held on Thursday, with the President of the Conference on Disarmament, the Chair of the Disarmament Commission, the Chair of the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, and the Director of the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). The panel discussed the challenges facing the different disarmament bodies in the UN. In the informal remarks, issues such as civil society participation, maintaining UNIDIR's role as an independent research institute, and suggestions for moving the machinery forward were raised.

Despite the delay in the thematic debate on this topic, six resolutions and one decision relevant to the disarmament machinery have been submitted.

Most of them are familiar documents and contain little new information. For example, A/C.1/67/L.5, the report of the Disarmament Commission, mainly confirms the agenda items and the dates for the 2013 session. A/C.1/67/L.58 on an "Open-ended Working Group on the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament" was submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement as has been biannually for many years. It calls for an organizational session for the purpose of setting a date for substantive sessions in 2013 and 2014.

After last year's resolution by Netherlands, South Africa, and Switzerland on "Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations" was adopted without a vote, the draft decision contained in A/C.1/67/L.31 simply decides to keep the issue on next year's agenda.

The annual resolution on the report of the Conference on Disarmament (A/C.1/67/L.33) contains a few small changes from previous years. Most significantly, it "notes with renewed concern" that the CD has yet failed to commence substantive work despite previous calls from the General Assembly, and makes a specific reference to the Egyptian proposal for a programme of work (CD/1933/Rev.1) from March 2012.

A new resolution, A/C.1/67/L.19, "High-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament," was submitted by the Non-Aligned Movement. Intended to contribute to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament, this resolution calls for a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament to be held on 26 September 2013.

Two new initiatives to break the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament can be found in A/C.1/67/L.41, "Treaty banning the production of fissile material for weapons purposes," and A/C.1/67/L.46, "Taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations".

While L.41 is an annual resolution submitted by Canada, this year it aims to set up a group of governmental experts (GGE) with a membership of 25 states, to "make recommendations on possible elements that could contribute to a treaty". The GGE will operate on the basis of consensus and will meet in Geneva for two sessions of two weeks in 2014 and 2015, and will report back to the General Assembly in 2015.

The resolution also includes a paragraph that provides for the work of the GGE to be concluded and submitted to the CD if member states agree and implement a programme of work that includes negotiations of a treaty banning fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The final new initiative is a proposal from Austria, Mexico, and Norway in A/C.1/67/L.46, "Taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations". This resolution seeks to establish an open-ended working group

in Geneva, to meet in 2013 for up to three weeks, “to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.” The resolution does not specify any rules of procedure, but provides for “contribution of international organizations and civil society”. In addition, the resolution does not make any specific reference to the CD and the working group appears to be unaffected by any potential progress there.

This resolution is different from last year’s attempt to break the deadlock by the same countries in A/C.1/66/L.21/Rev.1, which then called for the establishment of open-ended working groups on the CD’s four core issues. That draft resolution was never put forward for action.

These last two resolutions take slightly different approaches to breaking the deadlock of the CD. L.41 by Canada will focus on substantive discussions on a fissile materials treaty while L.46 is broader and focused on developing proposals for taking forward negotiations, rather than making recommendations for elements

of a treaty. However, the phrasing does not exclude that such concrete discussions on nuclear disarmament could take place in the open-ended working group.

L.46 also opens its work for the entire UN membership as well as for civil society and international organizations, while L.41 is limited to 25 countries.

Ultimately, L.41 clearly links its work to the deadlock in the CD, by specifying that the GGE will cease its work if the CD commences negotiations. L.46 on the other hand does not refer to the CD and its work and the working group will operate independently of any progress in the CD.

These two resolutions clearly signal an increased frustration with the lack of progress on any of the CD’s core issues. A GGE on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space has already started work, and if work on both fissile materials and nuclear disarmament can be initiated outside the CD through these two resolutions, the international community is sending a strong signal that the current deadlock is unacceptable and making progress on substance takes precedence over maintaining flawed machinery. •

DISARMAMENT EDUCATION

Rohie Drammeh | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

This year there are three resolutions related to disarmament and non-proliferation education.

A/C.1/67/L.34, “United Nations study on non-proliferation and disarmament education,” has been slightly revised from the 2010 version, which was adopted without a vote. It has been updated to reference the disarmament education website of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, which encourages the use of new communication technologies and social media for relevant educational efforts. It also recognizes the launch of the “Disarmament today” series of podcasts, “in which experts are interviewed about present-day disarmament issues, such as education, disarmament and non-proliferation in the context of space security, as well as the experiences of the Hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors).” The operative portion of the text remains largely the same as in 2010, though it does strengthen the language on civil society from “recognizing the importance of encouraging civil society ... to play a more active role in the promotion of disarmament and non-proliferation education” to “recognizing the importance of the participation of civil society ... which plays an active role”.

A/C.1/67/L.42, “United Nations Disarmament Information Programme,” was also last adopted in 2010 without a vote. This resolution commends the Secre-

tary-General for disseminating information on arms control and disarmament as widely as possible; stresses the importance of the Programme for “enabling all Member States to participate fully in the deliberations and negotiations on disarmament in the various United Nations bodies, in assisting them in complying with treaties, as required, and in contributing to agreed mechanisms for transparency;” and recommends the Programme continue its actions with focus on specific items such as intensifying interaction between the UN and the public. Minor updates include a new reference to the UNODA’s occasional papers series and the broadening the recommendation to “promote the use of the Programme as a means to provide information related to progress on the implementation of nuclear disarmament measures” from nuclear weapon states to everyone.

A/C.1/67/L.56, “United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services,” was also adopted without a vote in 2010. It contains technical updates regarding country-sponsored study visits but otherwise remains unchanged. The resolution notes the programme’s contribution to development awareness and understanding of disarmament issues among its fellows and requests the Secretary-General to continue the programme. •



HUMANITARIAN DISARMAMENT CAMPAIGNS SUMMIT COMMUNIQUÉ

Signed by more than 30 NGOs and coalitions in New York, 20-21 October 2012

We represent non-governmental organizations and coalitions working in the field of humanitarian disarmament, with the shared objective of protecting civilians from the harmful effects of armed violence. We have come together on the 20th anniversary of the founding of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, 1997 Nobel Peace Laureate, to review and strengthen our collective work and to expand and further unite our community.

We support strong disarmament initiatives driven by humanitarian imperatives to strengthen international law and protect civilians. By advancing disarmament from a humanitarian perspective, we seek to prevent further civilian casualties, avoid socio-economic devastation, and protect and ensure the rights of victims.

History has shown that the strongest and most significant disarmament achievements have been driven by humanitarian imperatives, as well as by the need to achieve the clearest and highest standards possible. These initiatives have involved genuine cooperation and substantive partnerships between governments, international organizations, and civil society. They have resulted in the complete prohibition of certain types and classes of weapons that cause unnecessary harm, such as antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions.

Humanitarian disarmament achievements are rarely the product of consensus decision-making, but rather created by the solid will of an overwhelming majority. Such approaches stand in stark contrast to processes where those few that want the least have been able to block the progress sought by the many.

Civil society plays a critical role in humanitarian disarmament. Our monitoring and research provides credible, first-hand information on the use of various weapons and the egregious harm they cause to civilian

populations. Our advocacy leads to the creation and implementation of strong national and international standards. Our operations in affected countries protect civilians, support conflict recovery, and prevent and reduce armed violence.

We welcome the substantive progress that is being made with respect to existing international humanitarian disarmament treaties, but urge continued vigilance to ensure compliance with, full and effective implementation of, and universalization of these instruments.

The world faces an array of emerging and long-standing humanitarian disarmament challenges that must be tackled as soon as possible. But we cannot do this work alone.

We therefore call on all actors to stay focused on making existing humanitarian disarmament treaties work and use every opportunity to advance international law and practice to prevent harm to civilians.

We urge all states to:

- Adopt a proactive approach to tackle existing and emerging issues of concern in humanitarian disarmament by reviewing and strengthening policy and practice, undertaking national measures, and intensifying diplomatic engagement and political leadership;
- Acknowledge that successful multilateral diplomatic work in humanitarian disarmament is best achieved when based on the will of the overwhelming majority of participating states;
- Recognize that civil society plays a vital role in tackling humanitarian disarmament concerns and work to accord a substantive role for civil society representatives in multilateral processes.

A complete list of signatories is available at www.4disarmament.org. •

SIDE EVENT: HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS—AN IMPERATIVE TO ACT

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

In achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons, there is an urgent need to revitalize a humanitarian-based discourse. This notion has recently gained traction: 16 countries delivered a joint statement on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons at the 2012 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty preparatory committee; 35 states joined a similar statement last week at First Committee; and an upcoming conference in Norway is set to focus on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear detonations. To examine

in further detail the humanitarian implications of nuclear weapons, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) organized a side event in conjunction with the Permanent Mission of Switzerland.

Dr. Ira Helfand, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), opened the discussion by noting that, for too long, nuclear disarmament has been treated as a technical and military question. However, this parochial debate centered on national security must be expanded or reframed since it is, in

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fact, “a public health and humanitarian question.” Using a simulated nuclear attack against New York City as a model, Dr. Helfand described such public health risks appurtenant to the nuclear explosion of a 20 megaton bomb. As he explained, an attack on New York today would involve, not one 20 megaton bomb, but perhaps 10 to 15 half megaton bombs. The megatonage would be less, but the destruction even greater as it would be more efficiently spread over the entire metropolitan area. Though it tends to underestimate the damage, the model of a single 20 megaton bomb serves to convey the scope of the destruction. Everything within a two-mile radius from the epicenter of the blast would be vaporized, everything flammable within a 16-mile radius would ignite, and everything living within this area would die. Within the first half hour, some 14 to 16 million people would be killed.

If this were part of a large scale war between the US and Russia, involving only those weapons they will still possess when New START is fully implemented, immense environmental havoc would also be wreaked; 150 million tonnes of soot would be blasted into the upper atmosphere causing an average global temperature drop of 8 degrees C. within days. For three days there would not be a single day free of frost in the Northern Hemisphere. Agriculture would stop, ecosystems would collapse and the vast majority of the human race would die.

Even a “limited” regional nuclear war, as might occur between India and Pakistan, would have catastrophic global effects. If only 100 Hiroshima sized bombs were used, less than 0.5% of the world’s nuclear arsenal, 5 million tons of soot would be lofted into the upper atmosphere dropping global temperatures 1.3 degrees C. The resulting decline in world food production would cause a global famine that would put one billion people at risk.

Dr. Robert Mtonga, IPPNW, continued to elucidate on the destruction generated by a limited nuclear war. A nuclear explosion and its concomitant environmental effects would result in a massive agricultural production decline, exacerbating food deficits and shortages. Subsequent spikes in food prices would make food inaccessible to many of the world’s poorest, infectious disease epidemics would proliferate, and conflict over scarce resources would be rife. He also touched on the municipal service, political, and other climate change effects that would inevitably ensue.

In light of the catastrophically destructive capacity of nuclear weapons, Dr. Rebecca Johnson (Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy) focused her comments on the path from here: how to act and who should act? As she explained, the option of strengthening our capacity to respond and increase survival rates has already been studied and deemed inadequate by the International Red Cross, since even a relatively “limited” regional use of nuclear weapons would quickly overwhelm the capacity of all humanitarian agencies to help victims. She doubted that the current non-proliferation regime could be strengthened enough to reduce the dangers, and argued instead for a multilateral approach aimed at banning nuclear weapons. The humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons are so foreseeably terrible that everyone—civil society, governments of nuclear weapon states (NWS), and governments of non-nuclear weapons states (NNWS)—must utilize their “legal and political right and the sovereign and collective responsibility to pursue negotiations” and bring to conclusion a globally effective nuclear ban treaty, noting that changing the legal status of nuclear weapons would be the most expeditious and practical way to facilitate and sustain global nuclear disarmament. •

SIDE EVENT: HELSINKI AND BEYOND

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

In a side event sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Ireland, several panelists from leading disarmament NGOs shared their views on the prospects of the upcoming 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle Eastern weapons of mass destruction (WMD) free zone (MEWMDFZ). Such a conference is part of the final outcome adopted at the 2010 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference. During the discussion, the cloud of pessimism surrounding the likely success of the 2012 conference was somewhat lifted; each panelist shared largely positive perceptions on the probable outcome of the conference and the ways in which to achieve such an outcome, focusing in particular on the role of civil society.

Dr. Rebecca Johnson (Acronym Institute for Disarma-

ment Diplomacy), chair of the panel, gave a brief introduction to some of the key issues associated with the establishment of a MEWMDFZ conference. Among other things, she noted the importance of ensuring that all relevant states are brought to the table, and that some kind of follow-up process or agreement emerges from the conference. It must be seen as a “confidence-building arena,” she explained, “which identifies the next steps for the process of dialogue and negotiations” on establishing this zone. Dr. Johnson also outlined the hopes of civil society for the conference: firstly, that all Middle Eastern states recognize that participation in the conference aligns with their security interests, and secondly, that certain Middle Eastern states move beyond the “sterile” debates in which they intransigently



demand establishment of regional peace and security before establishment of a zone, or vice versa.

Susi Snyder (IKV Pax Christi) succinctly conveyed her expectations of the forthcoming conference. As she elaborated, it is assumed that all states in the region will come to the table “without bias, baggage or prejudice to an outcome,” instead participating in good faith with a “fresh mind and a fresh perspective”. Additionally, she noted that there is an expectation of support, including ongoing financial and material support for track II discussions as well as a willingness to engage with non-traditional actors (such as the media). Several reasons form the basis for Ms. Snyder’s optimism about the conference. As she informed the audience, the shift in the balance of power in the Middle East is one cause for hope; changes in governance in the region; and the energy of the younger generation of the region.

Ms. Sharon Dolev, Israeli Disarmament Movement, began her presentation by describing the current discourses on a MEWMDFZ, namely, the assertion that a

nuclear weapons convention (NWC) is dependent on the establishment of a MEWMDFZ, or vice versa. In this context, she advocated for the simultaneous pursuit of both a NWC and a MEWMDFZ; they should be pursued in tandem since they are mutually reinforcing. Ms. Dolev shared similar sentiments to those of Ms. Snyder, hoping that the 2012 conference sees all states sitting at the table “with real good will”. She also expressed desire for ensuring that the conference produces a follow-up summit. Finally, Ms. Dolev described the impressive work in which her organization has been involved. This work has partly aimed at informing the Israeli public, parliament members, and media about the possibility of a MEWMDFZ and the 2012 conference—a subject that has lain dormant within Israel. Dr. Johnson lauded such work and emphasized the crucial role of civil society in this domain. As she contended, civil society can provide “a conscience and a wellspring of ideas,” helping governments grapple with seemingly intractable issues, such as the creation of a MEWMDFZ. •

SIDE EVENT: EFFECTIVE USE OF INFORMATION

Rohie Drammeh | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Following the 10th anniversary of the UN study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, the Permanent Mission of Japan and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) hosted a side event on how information can help combat the spread of conventional arms and WMD. The event was co-sponsored by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, New York Office.

In his opening remarks H.E. Mr. Tsuneo Nishida, the Permanent Representative of Japan to the UN, spoke of Japan’s dedication to disarmament education. He stressed the importance of other member states and youth to be active in disarmament education. In order for policies on disarmament to be effective, he asserted, they must be able to withstand time and the younger generation must therefore be equipped with the right tools to be able to make contributions in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. John Ennis, the Chief of Information and Outreach of UNDOA, discussed how to reach out to the younger generation. He emphasized that information has to be accessible as well as meaningful to youth. In looking for ways to engage the general public, UNDOA started the “Poetry for Peace” contest—a social media contest that invited the world to hear the living testimonies of the *Hibakusha* and then respond to the testimonies in verse. Mr. Ennis also highlighted UNODA’s “Art for Peace” contest, in which children from different age groups could participate. To ensure accessibility around the world, the contest was translated into several different languages and generated contestants from over 92 countries.

Ms. Terue Okada, Project Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo, described how she has had the chance to bring her students to New York where they discussed disarmament with UNODA and the Permanent Mission of Japan.

Mr. Mark Bromley, Senior Researcher with the Arms Transfers Programme at Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), made a brief presentation on SIPRI’s arms database. The data is used by academics as well as NGOs in their work, and SIPRI has sought to make it as transparent as possible.

Mr. Rodrigo Pintado from the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations presented the draft resolution that Mexico and Japan prepared for this year’s First Committee. He noted that some changes have been made, and references to the importance of utilizing social media to promote disarmament education have been added as well as references to the importance of youth involvement in the field. The language on civil society has been strengthened and international cooperation has been incorporated into the resolution.

H.E. Mr. Mari Amano, Permanent Representative of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament, made the closing remarks of the event. He said that few would oppose the education of youth, but we need to ask ourselves how to better reach youth in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Some good initiatives have already been made, and it is important to not lose sight of the goal but to keep going in the right direction. •

FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

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

Contributing organizations and programmes to this edition:

Cluster Munition Coalition
Global Action to Prevent War
International Campaign to Ban Landmines
Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy
NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security
Reaching Critical Will
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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