



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

GENERAL ASSEMBLY, FIRST COMMITTEE

GENERAL DEBATE ON ALL DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AGENDA ITEMS

STATEMENT BY MS. MYRIAM OEHRI, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

Chairperson,

We gather at a time of enormous turmoil and tension around the globe. The illegal flow of weapons into conflict areas continues unabated, including in open violation of Security Council arms embargoes or decisions by the General Assembly. Nuclear threats are at an alarming new high, and nuclear and other illegal missile tests remain an unacceptable reality, despite a robust international legal framework on disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty has been essential in preventing nuclear proliferation for over five decades, but the lack of its implementation, especially of Article VI, constitutes a serious risk to the treaty's normative strength and ultimately to a world free of nuclear weapons. Liechtenstein deeply regrets that the Tenth NPT Review Conference this August has not resulted in an outcome that advances the goals of the NPT and agrees on necessary steps for implementation. Especially in light of the alarming situation at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant which – according to IAEA Director General Grossi – “is becoming increasingly precarious”, an unwavering commitment from all sides to prevent a nuclear catastrophe is urgently needed. Liechtenstein fully supports the work of the IAEA to assist Ukraine in ensuring nuclear safety and security.

In the absence of progress on the implementation of the NPT, nuclear powers have continued to modernize and enhance their capabilities – ostensibly in the name of deterrence. But the Russian

aggression committed against Ukraine has demonstrated another kind of deterrence – one aimed at preventing Ukraine, a State that gave up its nuclear capabilities with the promise of Russian protection – from defending its own territorial integrity. In this respect, Liechtenstein condemns any and all nuclear threats, whether they be explicit or implicit and irrespective of the circumstances. Russia has instead brought home in stark terms that the risk of the use of nuclear weapons is indeed real, and reminds us that so long as they exist, such weapons will never make the world a safer place. This understanding is the animating force behind the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which strengthens the NPT framework in defining new and concrete perspectives for nuclear disarmament. We hope that more States will join the treaty, especially those who can contribute directly to a world free of nuclear weapons.

Chairperson,

According to Article 2 of the UN Charter, the use of force is strictly prohibited unless authorized by the Security Council or used in legitimate self-defense. Illegal war, such as Russia's aggression against Ukraine, must be prevented at all times, and perpetrators must be held to account. At the same time, States have the right to self-defense if an armed attack occurs against them, and when this happens they should be supported including with the means to do so whenever necessary. Russia's recent attempt to annex yet more Ukrainian territory is a continuation of its aggression and self-defense therefore continues to apply in this case.

Liechtenstein welcomes the First Committee's consideration of cybersecurity. Militarized cyber-attacks against critical infrastructure including telecommunications networks, power grids, health programs as well as political and judicial systems undermine democratic norms and expose State institutions and their populations to great risk. The UN Charter's cornerstone prohibition of the use of force must be enforced everywhere, including when conducted in cyberspace. Despite a common understanding that international law, in particular the UN Charter, fully applies to cyberspace, activities by States and other actors to move the domain of warfare to cyberspace have met with little consequence.

Liechtenstein together with like-minded States Parties to the Rome Statute has explored the role the International Criminal Court may play in the regulation of warfare as it evolves in the 21st century by creating a Council of Advisers on the Application of the Rome Statute to Cyberwarfare. We were pleased to have published the Council of Advisers' report last year during International Law Week. The report aims to help develop a clearer understanding of how the Rome Statute and therefore international criminal law more generally apply to cyberwarfare, which is more pertinent than ever in light of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Chairperson,

At this time of great uncertainty over issues of disarmament, this committee must work closely with the UN's other organs responsible for peace and security. Liechtenstein is pleased that the General Assembly was able to convene as a result of the Veto Initiative in response to the double veto by China and the Russian Federation in May over illegal missile testing by the DPRK, a resolution that was mandated by previous Council products. We also continue to hope for the Security Council to finally pass a product in relation to the devastating situation in Myanmar that will call on Member States to prevent the flow of arms into Myanmar and to de-escalate violence, as the General Assembly did in a resolution after the military coup last year.

Only through effective and inclusive multilateralism will we find our way back to conflict prevention, disarmament and a decrease in military expenditure – which is not only conducive to international peace and security, but also to the achievement of the SDGs more broadly. All military spending has an opportunity cost, for example for pandemic prevention or climate change mitigation, which are highly alarming human security threats of our times. Militarization also negatively impacts gender equality, including through limiting women and girls' access to education and economic opportunities. For a peaceful, just, inclusive and sustainable world, we must invest wisely and join forces.

I thank you.