Statement by Finland

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Thematic Debate (Clusters 1,2,3,4)

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to the United Nations

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(check against delivery)
Mr. Chairman,

In addition to the statement by the European Union, let me make the following statement on behalf of Finland.

The postponed 10th NPT Review Conference is set to convene in January 2022. The NPT is a remarkable success story. State Parties have every reason to be proud of the success of the NPT.

The NPT has effectively curbed the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It provides an internationally recognised basis for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Not least, the NPT contains a legally binding commitment to pursue nuclear disarmament in good faith.

While we recognise the success of the NPT, it is obvious that there is a need for further progress, especially in nuclear disarmament.

While the total number of nuclear weapons today is significantly lower than during the bad old days of the Cold War, this downward trend is under threat by intensifying great power competition and increased reliance on nuclear weapons in security policies.

While all nuclear possessors must participate in nuclear arms control and disarmament, the overwhelmingly biggest nuclear weapons states, the Russian Federation and the United States, need to continue spearheading nuclear disarmament.

Let me be clear on our position: all nuclear weapon possessors need to commit themselves to nuclear disarmament and all nuclear possessors need to accelerate their action towards this end. We are expecting enhanced commitments in nuclear disarmament in the forthcoming NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Nuclear proliferation is menace plaguing all nations and all peoples. There is absolutely no need for more countries – let alone any non-state actor – possessing nuclear weapons.

The illegal nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programmes of North Korea pose an urgent risk to international peace and security. We urge North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons and dismantle its nuclear weapons programme completely, in a verifiable and irreversible manner. This would be a fresh starting point for improved security and prosperity for the people of Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Maintaining the integrity of the IAEA safeguards system, based on the NPT, is essential. This in mind, we call on Iran to cooperate fully and immediately with the Agency. The JCPOA is a milestone in nuclear non-proliferation and Finland strongly supports the intensive diplomatic efforts within the JCPOA Joint Commission. It is crucial to resume the negotiations in view of a possible return of the US to the JCPOA, and the perspective of Iran’s return to full JCPOA implementation, including its transparency measures.

Mr. Chairman

Nuclear weapons pose a risk for every nation. A nuclear weapon detonation would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. It is in our common interest to reduce risks for any nuclear weapon use – intended or unintended.
Nuclear risk reduction includes a wide range of measures ranging from political declarations to technical crisis communication arrangements. Nuclear risk reduction is no substitute for nuclear disarmament, but can certainly advance it.

In our view, international cooperation and agreements on nuclear risk reduction measures can help us to close pathways to nuclear use. We welcome the increased interest and actions on nuclear risk reduction. Finland contributes actively for finding and building common ground in nuclear risk reduction within the Stockholm Initiative on nuclear disarmament and within the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative.

Reduction of nuclear risks deserve a major place in the deliberations and outcomes of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Advancing nuclear disarmament and reaching the nuclear zero requires determined political will. It requires serious negotiations taking into account security concerns of all nations. Going forward and avoiding backtracking is more important than knowing the exact time of arrival.

In the meantime, let us make it sure nuclear weapons will never be used again. As been stated by so many speakers in this chamber: nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought!