

Check against delivery

Statement by Mr. Anatolii Zlenko, Second Secretary, Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the UN, at the First Committee Thematic Debate on Clusters I-IV
(13 October 2021, New York)

Mr. Chair,

We continue to consider the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

Ukraine supports all three pillars of the NPT, namely nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear energy. The long-awaited Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty is an important opportunity for all States Parties to reaffirm the existing commitments, as well as to find commonalities and reaching progress on some of most pressing issues. In this regard, we will continue to promote the implementation of practical steps and actions contained in 2010 Conference Action Plan.

Ukraine is one of major contributors to international peace and security. Ukraine voluntarily surrendered the world's third largest nuclear weapons arsenal in exchange for the security assurances provided in writing by Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States in the Budapest Memorandum of 1994.

Almost twenty years later, the Russian Federation launched terrifying by its scale armed aggression against Ukraine, occupied the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, as well as certain areas in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. Despite the calls by the Guarantor States under the Budapest Memorandum to hold consultations in accordance with Article 6 of this document, which envisages that Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Russian Federation will consult in the event a situation arises which raises a question concerning the commitments laid down in the Memorandum, Russia ignored all of them, by declaring that it “did not see the subject for the discussion”.

Against this background, Ukraine seeks the adoption of an international agreement that would replace the Budapest Memorandum and provide direct and reliable guarantees of peace and security.

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine supports the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), as well as strictly adheres to the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

We condemn in the strongest possible terms the attack on Mr Alexei Navalny, who was poisoned in Russia by a military chemical nerve agent of the novichok group. The use of novichok has been confirmed by independent laboratories in Germany, France and Sweden, as well as by two OPCW designated laboratories.

Ukraine also strongly denounces the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Republic. In this regard, we fully support the work of OPCW Declaration Assessment Team, the Fact-Finding Mission as well the Investigation and Identification Team in investigating chemical weapons use in Syria and identifying perpetrators of such attacks.

We reiterate that the use of chemical weapons by anyone, be it State or non-State actors, anywhere and under any circumstances is a violation of international law, and express our conviction that perpetrators must be held accountable.

Ukraine attaches great significance to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) as an invaluable tool in the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation of WMD, especially now, as my country faces ruinous consequences of Russian aggression negatively impacting, in particular, biosafety and biosecurity of Ukraine.

The proper implementation of UN SC Resolution 1540 (2004) and other related resolutions is another priority matter for Ukraine. We consider 1540 resolution as an important instrument to address the evolving risk of obtaining WMD by non-state actors.

We believe that the universalization of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missiles Proliferation (HCoC) is of vital importance for increasing transparency and confidence building against the proliferation of these type of weapons.

Ukraine recognizes the crucial role of international export control regimes in preventing proliferation of WMD, in particular Missiles Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), as well as the Australia Group (AG), as well as reaffirms the importance of the Zangger Committee in implementing non-proliferation obligations under paragraph 2 of Article III of the NPT.

Mr. Chair,

We stress the importance of preservation of a safe, secure and sustainable space environment and the peaceful use of outer space.

In this regard, Ukraine continues to promote transparency and confidence-building measures, adherence to the applicable international law, as well as development of norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviors for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

We strongly support the establishment of an Open-Ended Working Group on reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours as proposed in the updated draft resolution of the First Committee tabled by the United Kingdom entitled «Reducing Space Threats Through Responsible Behaviours».

Mr. Chair,

Ukraine recognizes the important role of the Convention of Certain Conventional Weapons in addressing post-conflict remedial measures in order to minimize the occurrence, risk and effects of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). Being a State party to the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention, Ukraine acknowledges its fundamental character in minimizing the occurrence, risk and effects of landmines. We also strictly implement the international instruments in the field of preventing and combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW), including the UN Security Council resolutions, the decisions taken within the Wassenaar Arrangement, the UN Programme of Action on SALW and its International Tracing Instrument.

To date, the Russian Federation continues its destabilizing transfers of different types of conventional weapons, including SALW, to our territory through the uncontrolled by the Government of Ukraine segment of Ukraine-Russia border, which pose a threat to European security. The certain areas in the temporarily occupied Donetsk and Luhansk regions are full of ERW, causing severe casualties among civilians, including children.

I thank you, Mr. Chair