EU Statement
on
"Disarmament Machinery"

By

Mr. Andras Kos,
Minister Counsellor,
Delegation of the European Union

at the

First Committee of the 67th session of the
General Assembly of the United Nations

United Nations
New York
25 October 2012

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -
Mr. Chairman

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Acceding country Croatia, the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland and Serbia, the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

1. The European Union strongly believes that a multilateral approach to security, disarmament and non-proliferation is the best means of maintaining international peace and security. We are a strong supporter of the United Nations and of effective multilateralism. We therefore consider that the General Assembly and its First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the different international treaties and regimes in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation should be mutually reinforcing.

2. The existence of new threats to international security makes it more important than ever to have properly functioning disarmament machinery. Since we all recognise that today's global security problems require co-operative and multilateral solutions, now is the time to reinforce and revitalise the UN disarmament machinery. We in the EU are fully committed to maintaining and strengthening the continued momentum in global disarmament and arms control. At the same time, we see a need to overcome the crisis we have been experiencing in multilateral disarmament efforts over many years in particular as a result of the ongoing stalemate in the CD and the lack of tangible results in the UNDC. This is all the more important as we need to address major proliferation challenges. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, together with confidence, transparency and reciprocity, are vital aspects of collective security.

3. The European Union remains convinced that the role of the UN disarmament machinery is central and indeed irreplaceable. At the same time, we regret that both the deliberative and the negotiating bodies set up under the auspices of the General Assembly have been falling short of their agreed mandates for more than a decade. The progress made in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control in other fora, both within and outside the framework of the United Nations, demonstrates that deliberations and negotiations on these issues can yield results.

Mr Chairman,

4. Let me now set out the EU's views with regard to the UNGA First Committee, the UNDC and the Conference on Disarmament:

5. Firstly, the UNGA First Committee should concentrate its efforts on the most pertinent and topical issues, rather than maintaining the practice of proceeding in a formalistic manner and simply updating resolutions previously adopted. The First Committee must be a forum for open and relevant discussions, able to deal with contemporary challenges to our collective security and design concrete measures to this end. All UN member states share responsibility for maintaining the relevance of this forum and for making sure that we debate current security challenges and develop concrete measures to address them.

6. As regards the United Nations Disarmament Commission, the European Union would have preferred to adopt a more focused agenda for the new triennial cycle during its meeting in

---

*Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

*Iceland continues to be a member of EFTA and the European Economic Area.*
April. The discussion during the three-week session proved that, despite efforts of many delegations and the President of the UNDC, the Commission was not able to have a more structured or productive discussion in the working groups. On a positive note, the UNDC did have some constructive and open discussion on its working methods. We consider it necessary to continue this discussion in order for the UNDC to once again become a relevant body and to fulfil its true potential.

7. We remain deeply troubled by the on-going stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament, despite recent attempts to achieve consensus such as the draft Decision on a Programme of Work CD/1933 Rev.1 submitted for adoption in March 2012. The CD in accordance with its mandate has a crucial role to negotiate multilateral treaties. Its revitalization is more urgent than ever. On 24 January 2012, at the opening meeting of this year’s CD session we heard the UN Secretary General’s urgent appeal to all members to support the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD. We fully support and endorse this appeal. It is indeed in the hands of all CD members to restore the CD to the central role it can play in strengthening the non-proliferation regime and multilateral disarmament. They bear the responsibility of making the CD deliver according to its mandate. The EU continues to urge the last remaining State to join consensus in adopting a PoW, which inter alia will enable negotiations on an FMCT.

8. In line with the adopted Programme of Work CD/1864 we call on all CD member states to start negotiations on FMCT without delay and to begin work on the other issues on the agenda. We call on all states possessing nuclear weapons to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

9. We would like to reiterate our longstanding commitment to the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. We underline the importance of continuation of consultations on the expansion of the membership and strongly support appointing a special co-ordinator on the expansion of the CD membership. Consistent with our engagement with civil society, we are also keen to explore ways to strengthen the voice of NGOs and to associate research institutions in the work of the CD.

10. In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to working for United Nations disarmament machinery able to deliver tangible results. We also stand ready to work with all delegations on further steps to make other operational suggestions and to envisage other concrete and operational options. The effective functioning of multilateral disarmament institutions is vital for our security. The long-term deadlock of core disarmament fora such as the CD poses a serious problem, which it behoves all states to overcome. We are ready during this session to engage with you, Mr Chair, and with all UN member states, in particular on the proposals the EU presented during the last year’s HLM debate as well as to consider other options to overcome the deadlock in the CD or – to put it more broadly – to revitalize the multilateral disarmament machinery to take multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament forward.

11. The CD needs to resume its work without delay. We urgently need multilateral progress on the crucial issues that have been on our agenda for such a long time. We reiterate our call for substantive follow-up and for the disarmament machinery to do what it was created to do.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.