Statement

By

Ms. Daire Courtney

Third Secretary
Disarmament and Non-Proliferation
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

UNGA73 First Committee

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Check against delivery
Ireland National Statement
Disarmament Machinery

Thank You Chair,

1. Ireland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the European Union. I wish to add the following remarks in a national capacity.

2. The challenges we face require urgent attention. Properly functioning disarmament machinery that is fit for purpose, efficient and produces results is essential, not just for narrow disarmament issues but for global peace and for the credibility of the multilateral system. Ireland shares the view of the Member States that have spoken before who wish to see the UN disarmament machinery operate in the manner it was originally intended. Our disarmament architecture must facilitate rather than hinder our ability to make meaningful progress on our shared objectives.

3. The First Committee is an important forum in setting the agenda on disarmament and non-proliferation. We welcome the improvements in the working methods of this committee and, in particular, the electronic co-sponsorship system. However, we would welcome a meaningful effort by Member States to explore ways and means of including the voices of civil society more into our work. Their knowledge and expertise is essential in ensuring the disarmament machinery remains connected to emerging issues.

4. The links between disarmament and international security have been highlighted on a number of occasions throughout this Committee. A lack of progress on disarmament commitments and, in some cases, a reversal on those commitments will lead to an increasingly difficult global security environment.

Chair,

5. Breaking the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament is a top priority for Ireland. It is deeply troubling that Ireland has been a member of the CD for almost twenty years but in that time consensus on a programme of work has never been achieved. We are greatly encouraged by the valuable work that has been undertaken by the Subsidiary Bodies this year and hope that the momentum can help us to reach an agreed programme of work as soon as possible. We also support broadening the membership of the CD in order to boost its credibility as an inclusive forum.
6. In a United Nations where resources are scarce and there are competing demands across the board, the CD is a well-funded body. We, as Member States, have a responsibility to demonstrate the flexibility and political will to step outside the strict silos of national self-interest and achieve genuine progress.

7. This is why Ireland warmly welcomes the new disarmament initiative by the UN Secretary General, on the need to restore disarmament to its central role in building international peace and security. We look forward to working together to break the deadlock that has stymied progress on a number of issues.

Mr. Chair,

8. Ireland is disappointed that a number of disarmament meetings have been shortened or cancelled over the past number of years due to funding issues. We strongly urge all States to pay their assessed contributions in a timely manner to avoid further impacts on our work.

9. It is a matter of course that sustainable funding is critical to a properly functioning disarmament machinery. In this regard, we welcome this year’s UNGA report on UNIDIR and we look forward to the adoption by consensus of the draft decision tabled this year. We as Member States must aim to put UNIDIR on a more sustainable, long term funding structure and operational model. The institute has a proven track-record in conducting research of the highest quality and convening and facilitating difficult discussions across a broad range of disarmament topics. It also has a vital technical competence and provided essential input to our work at the subsidiary bodies at the CD. The long-term financial sustainability of the institute is therefore in all our interests.

Chair,

10. Ireland has long highlighted issues relating to gender in the disarmament sphere. We firmly believe improving the equal engagement and participation of women across multiple disarmament fora and strongly advocate for gender diversity across all platforms.

11. This year, Ireland, Namibia and UNIDIR took practical steps toward realising gender equality and the inclusion of gender perspectives in the disarmament
machinery, by establishing the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group. This impact group held two successful events in 2018, one in Geneva to determine in coordination with disarmament stakeholders the entry points for mainstreaming gender effectively in disarmament fora, and another here in New York to engage First Committee delegations on actions toward gender equality as per the Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament. As a result, the Disarmament Impact Group, in coordination with representatives of UN Member States, civil society and other stakeholders, has identified a number of disarmament fora for priority engagement in 2019, including the NPT PrepCom, the ATT and the APLC RevCon. As co-chair of the impact group, Ireland looks forward to building momentum on gender equality in the disarmament machinery. We thank the many Member States and other stakeholders who have contributed to the work of the Group to date, and we welcome all efforts to prioritise gender in our work.

Thank you