



First Committee (Disarmament and International Security)

Note: Owing to the liquidity crisis impacting our Organization, only a partial summary of statements made in today's meeting of the First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) is available at this time. The complete summary will be issued later as Press Release GA/DIS/3643.

Background

The First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) met this afternoon to take action on all draft resolutions and decisions before it. For background information, see Press Release [GA/DIS/3624 \(/press/en/2019/gadis3624.doc.htm\)](#), of 10 October, [GA/DIS/3640 \(/press/en/2019/gadis3640.doc.htm\)](#), of 1 November, [GA/DIS/3641 \(/press/en/2019/gadis3641.doc.htm\)](#) of 4 November and [GA/DIS/3642 \(/press/en/2019/gadis3642.doc.htm\)](#), of 5 November.

Action on Draft Texts

At the outset of the meeting, representatives explained their positions on draft resolutions related to conventional weapons which the Committee approved on 5 November. (For details on voting results, see Press Release [GA/DIS/3642 \(/press/en/2019/gadis3642.doc.htm\)](#).)

The representative of [Myanmar](#), explaining his delegation's abstention on the draft resolutions "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction" (document A/C.1/74/L.45) and "Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions" (document A/C.1/74/L.46), said his country supports the provisions of those two instruments. However, capacity constraints prevent Myanmar from adhering to the Mine Ban Treaty, but it is considering doing so.

The representative of [Brazil](#) said his delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution "The Arms Trade Treaty" (document A/C.1/74/L.25) as a whole, but abstained on operative paragraph 9 as the use of the term "synergies", in the phrase "acknowledges synergies between the Programme of Action (on Small Arms and Light Weapons) and the Treaty", is inadequate. Regarding "L.46," he said Brazil did not participate in the Oslo process and disagrees with the establishment of negotiation processes outside the Convention. Serious loopholes in the instrument allow the use of cluster munitions with sophisticated mechanisms manufactured in a small number of countries with more advanced defence industries.

The representative of [Israel](#) said his delegation does not consider the Programme of Action on Small Arms as the right venue to address the issue of ammunition, referring to operative paragraph 9 in "L.25" and preambular paragraph 7 and operative paragraph 6 in the draft resolution "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects" (document A/C.1/74/L.43).

The representative of [United States](#) abstained on "L.46" because his delegation is not a party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and does not accept that it represents a norm or a prohibition on the use of these weapons. When used in accordance to international humanitarian law, cluster munitions can be used to lessen collateral damage. As this is a practical matter for the military, they remain an integral part of United States force capabilities. Turning to "L.43" and "L.25", he reiterated that the issue of ammunition is outside the realm of the Arms Trade Treaty. The United States strongly and unequivocally opposes the inclusion of ammunition language and cannot accept statements claiming that this instrument is a success when consensus was clearly not achieved.

The representative of [Singapore](#) said his delegation voted in favour of "L.45" because it supports efforts to address anti-personnel mines, adding that his country adopted an indefinite moratorium on their export. Similarly, his delegation voted in favour of "L.46" because it supports actions on cluster munitions.

The representative of the [Republic of Korea](#) said his delegation abstained on "L.45" because it is not a party of the Mine Ban Convention due to the situation on the Korean Peninsula. He supported tight control of anti-personnel mines and advocated for their limited and responsible use, adding that the Government contributes to demining and victim assistance efforts. In a similar vein, due to the current situation on the Korean Peninsula, his delegation is not part of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and abstained on "L.46". While the Republic of Korea fully shares concerns of the international community on the human impact of cluster munitions, his delegation is unable to support the draft resolution at the moment, but support efforts to mitigate human problems associated with these arms.

The representative of [Argentina](#), explaining that her delegation abstained on "L.46", said the text was not sufficiently ambitious and included two articles which run contrary to the goal of the full prohibition of cluster munitions.

The representative of India said her delegation abstained on “L.25”, explaining that her country has established strong and effective export controls that conform with the Arms Trade Treaty. While India abstained on “L.45”, it supports the vision of a world free of landmines.

The representative of Cyprus said her delegation abstained on “L.46”. She noted that its ratification process is still ongoing due to the abnormal security situation on the island of Cyprus.

The representative of Pakistan said his delegation abstained on “L.45”, adding that reliance on anti-personnel mines is an integral part of his country’s self-defence strategy.

The representative of Syria said his delegation abstained on the draft resolution “Transparency in armaments” (document A/C.1/74/L.30), due to the current situation in the Middle East. Syria voted in favour of several paragraphs in “L.43”, given the importance of the topic and in consideration of Syria’s brothers and sisters in Africa and the Caribbean.

The representative of Ecuador explained his delegation’s decision to support, oppose and abstain on several draft resolutions. He added that Ecuador is examining the Arms Trade Treaty to see how it is being implemented and whether the problems it contains persist.

The Committee then turned to its cluster on other disarmament measures and international security, taking up the following nine draft resolutions: “Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament” (document A/C.1/74/L.15); “Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control” (document A/C.1/74/L.29); “Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation” (document A/C.1/74/L.32); “Relationship between disarmament and development” (document A/C.1/74/L.35); “Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation” (document A/C.1/74/L.48); “Advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security” (document A/C.1/74/L.49/Rev.1); “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security” (document A/C.1/74/L.50/Rev.1); “Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures” (document A/C.1/74/L.51); and “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements” (document A/C.1/74/L.56/Rev.1).

The representative of the Republic of Korea said his delegation has sponsored “L.48” with the aim of empowering and educating youth in disarmament because they can provide fresh views and ideas that will guide future efforts, also expressing hope for a consensus on the draft resolution.

The representative of the United States introduced “L.49/Rev.1”, expressing hope for its approval by consensus. Efforts should focus on the Group of Governmental Experts and not on negotiations in the First Committee, he said, adding that he is disappointed the Russian Federation has refused this objective and has created a rift. He welcomed new efforts to advance the issue of responsible State behaviour in outer space.

The representative of Cuba said her delegation supports “L.50/Rev.1” and called on members to support it because it reflects an existing concern towards the development of technologies for military purposes in the field of information and communications. The right way to address this concern is through the Open-ended Working Group to develop an international legally binding instrument to address cybersecurity and current threats in this domain.

The representative of the United Kingdom, speaking also on behalf of France, said regarding “L.29” that he is strongly committed to the fight against climate change, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change. They will also join consensus on “L.35”, adding however that the notion of a symbiotic link between disarmament issues and development policy seems questionable. The relationship between the two is complex, given that investment in defence can be a requirement for development.

The representative of Finland, speaking on behalf of the European Union, said the bloc’s member States will join consensus on “L.56/Rev.1”. It is important that all parties, including the main sponsor, the Russian Federation, contribute to improving the strategic context and preserving and advancing treaties and agreements on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The representative of France, speaking also on behalf of the United Kingdom and the United States, said they will support “L.15”, which highlights the benefits and challenges of the developments of science and technology in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It is an issue that is discussed in many forums, she said, adding that the rights referred to in preambular paragraph 5 are those enshrined in provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and of Their Destruction.

The representative of Australia said his delegation, in a change from the seventy-third session, will abstain on “L.50/Rev.1”, adding that it is disappointed that the climate is not yet conducive to a single text on cyberspace.

The representative of the Russian Federation explained his position on “L.49/Rev.1”, saying that from the beginning, his delegation has advocated to re-establish consensus and adopt a single draft resolution to be accepted by all. This is the only logical way to reach consensus, he said, noting that the Russian Federation has proposed to the United States to jointly develop a document. Instead, the United States proposed a separate document on same issue,

which undermines unity within the United Nations and is based on the logic of dividing the international community. Moreover, the language implies the use of information and communications technologies for military aims. The Russian Federation cannot accept those proposals. A real consensus is possible in the General Assembly, he said, calling on all Member States to restore a real unity on this issue.

The Committee first took up the draft resolution "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" (document A/C.1/74/L.15). By its terms, the General Assembly would invite Member States to continue to apply developments in science and technology for disarmament-related purposes. It would also call upon them to remain vigilant in understanding new and emerging developments in science and technology that could imperil international security.

Acting without a vote, the Committee approved the draft resolution.

It then considered the draft resolution "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control" (document A/C.1/74/L.29). By its terms, the Assembly would reaffirm that international disarmament forums should consider relevant norms in negotiating treaties and agreements on disarmament and arms limitation. It would also call upon States to adopt unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures that will contribute to ensuring the application of scientific and technological progress within the framework of international security, disarmament and other related spheres, without detriment to the environment or to its effective contribution to attaining sustainable development.

Acting without a vote, the Committee approved the draft resolution.

Next, the Committee took up the draft resolution "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation" (document A/C.1/74/L.32), by which terms the Assembly would request States parties to instruments dealing with weapons of mass destruction to consult and cooperate among themselves when resolving non-compliance and implementation concerns, and to refrain from unilateral actions against one another.

The Committee then approved it by a recorded vote of 124 in favour to 4 against (Israel, Federated States of Micronesia, United Kingdom, United States), with 52 abstentions.

The Committee then took up the draft resolution "Relationship between disarmament and development" (document A/C.1/74/L.35). By its terms, the Assembly would urge the international community to devote part of the resources made available from disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development to reduce the gap between developed and developing countries. It would also encourage the international community to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and to note the contribution that disarmament could provide and to make greater efforts to integrate disarmament, humanitarian and development activities.

Acting without a vote, the Committee approved the draft resolution.

It then turned its attention to the draft resolution "Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation" (document A/C.1/74/L.48). By the terms of that text, the Assembly would call upon Member States, the United Nations, relevant specialized agencies, and regional and subregional organizations to consider developing and implementing policies and programmes for young people to increase and facilitate their constructive engagement in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

By a recorded vote of 175 in favour to none against, with 2 abstentions (Russian Federation, Syria), it decided to retain preambular paragraph 8, by which the Assembly would note action 38 of the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, "Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament", in which he describes the young generation as the ultimate force for change and proposes actions to promote their engagement.

Acting without a vote, the Committee then approved the draft resolution.

Next, the Committee turned its attention to the draft resolution "Advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security" (document A/C.1/74/L.49/Rev.1). By the terms of that text, the Assembly would call upon Member States to be guided in their use of information and communications technologies by the 2010, 2013 and 2015 reports of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. The Assembly would also call upon Member States to support measures to address the threats emerging in cyberspace and ensure an open, interoperable, reliable and secure information and communications technology environment consistent with the need to preserve the free flow of information.

The Committee approved that text by a recorded vote of 161 in favour to 10 against (Bolivia, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, Iran, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syria, Venezuela), with 8 abstentions (Belarus, Burundi, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Myanmar, Palau).

It then turned its attention to the draft resolution "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" (document A/C.1/74/L.50/Rev.1). By the terms of that text, the Assembly would welcome the launch of negotiations in the format of the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security and the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.

The Committee approved the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 124 in favour to 6 against (Canada, Georgia, Israel, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States), with 48 abstentions.

The Committee then turned to the draft resolution “Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures” (document A/C.1/74/L.51). By its terms, the Assembly would call upon Member States to provide the Secretary-General, by 30 April annually, with a report on their military expenditures for the latest fiscal year for which data are available, preferably using one of the online reporting forms, including a nil report or the “single figure” report on military expenditures or any other format developed in the context of similar reporting on military expenditures to other international or regional organizations.

The Committee Secretary delivered an oral statement on programme budget implications.

The Committee approved the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 176 in favour to none against, with 2 abstentions (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Palau).

The Committee then took up the draft resolution “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements” (document A/C.1/74/L.56/Rev.1). By its terms, the Assembly would urge all States parties to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties/agreements to implement them in full. It would support international efforts aimed at safeguarding the integrity of existing arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties/agreements in the strongest interest of humankind. It would also request the Secretary-General to continue to help to protect the integrity of such treaties and agreements and to strengthen their systems.

The Committee approved the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 174 in favour to none against, with 5 abstentions (Colombia, Georgia, Palau, Sudan, Ukraine).

The representative of the United States, speaking also for the United Kingdom, said he voted in favour of “L.56/Rev.1”. However, the Russian Federation’s sponsorship of the draft resolution is in contrast with its actions. Progress in arms control is a value derived from a party’s compliance. Instead, Moscow violates its obligations as a treaty partner and behaves in clear violation of chemical weapons treaties, including its use of the agent novichok in the United Kingdom, killing one woman and injuring four people. Citing more cases of aggressions that have created a deficit of trust involving the Russian Federation, he said Moscow is updating and increasing its nuclear stockpiles and related systems and is producing intercontinental cruise missiles. Turning to “L.50/Rev.1”, he said efforts by the Group of Governmental Experts and the Open-ended Working Group are two distinct processes, and even though he supported the draft resolution, his delegation voted against it due to concerns about some controversial or undefined language. As for “L.29”, he said his delegation did not participate on its drafting and does not see a connection between environmental issues and arms control. On “L.35”, he said disarmament and development are two distinct issues, adding that his delegation is not bound by international agreements that state this idea.

The representative of Malaysia said he voted in favour of “L.49/Rev.1” and “L.50/Rev.1” because his delegation believes both carry great value in the field of information technologies and national security. Malaysia believes the Group of Governmental Experts and the Open-ended Working Group are complementary, both being platforms to conduct vital work to build mutual trust and transparency.

The representative of Mexico said her delegation voted in favour of “L.50/Rev.1”, but disassociates itself from operational paragraph 8 because it is not accurate to say multilateral disarmament is reached by consensus in nature. Each treaty has its own dynamic, and there is no common denominator. Indeed, consensus must not be confused with uniformity.

 **For information media. Not an official record.**
