

Joint Statement on Gender and Disarmament

78th Session of the UN General Assembly

First Committee

Disarmament Machinery cluster

Thank you Mr Chairman,

I take the floor on behalf of: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Palau, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Uruguay.

We wish to underscore the importance of continuing to strengthen the integration of a gender perspective in the work of the First Committee and across the Disarmament Machinery.

The UN Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace highlights the different ways in which gender plays an important role across international peace and security issues. We are encouraged by Action 5 of the New Agenda for Peace to 'transform gendered power dynamics in peace and security', as well as commitment 5 of the UN Secretary General's Our Common Agenda to 'put women and girls at the centre of security policy'.

We also recall the UNSG's *Agenda for Disarmament* which recognizes that incorporating a gender perspective makes for more effective arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

Gender perspectives provide key insights into how women, men, girls and boys can be differentially impacted by armed conflict and weapons. It is a cross-cutting issue with direct relevance to the implementation of broader peace and security efforts, and contributes to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and all subsequent resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, and the related Beijing +25 process.

The differential gendered impacts of armed conflict on women, men, boys and girls are a critical consideration in the effective implementation of arms control and disarmament agreements. For example, landmine clearance efforts must take into account that in many mine-affected regions, men and women have different socio-economic responsibilities, which in turn influence land use, transit pathways and overall vulnerability to landmines. Applying a gender lens to our work allows us to devise more sustainable, comprehensive and targeted policy solutions, which are inclusive and impactful, and address some of the gendered impacts faced by those in situations of heightened vulnerability.

Indeed, the pursuit of a gender perspective in our work strengthens diverse, inclusive and meaningful participation by women and men in all aspects of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

Chair,

The continued research by the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) into these issues highlights that women remain underrepresented in arms control and disarmament fora, particularly in leadership roles. There is a need to understand the mechanisms and obstacles behind the lack of representation of women. We strongly encourage specific, targeted actions so that women and men are equally and meaningfully represented in our work and in decision making to help achieve effective and sustainable outcomes. Diverse perspectives can bring new insights and improve the functioning of our disarmament machinery, and we urge States to improve gender balance in their delegations at all levels.

We welcome the significant work that has been done in recent years to advance these issues within the broader disarmament machinery, including:

- The increase in First Committee resolutions that consider a gender perspective;
- Efforts to achieve gender balance in the bureaux of disarmament and non-proliferation conferences;
- Efforts to implement the decisions taken on gender and gender-based violence within the context of the Arms Trade Treaty, the outcome of the Biennial Meetings of States on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and the outcome of the OEWG to elaborate a set of political commitments as a new Global Framework that will address existing gaps in through-life ammunition management;
- The focus on gender considerations at the Review Conferences of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions;
- The “Women in Cyber” Fellowship and the increased engagement of women diplomats in the Open Ended Working Group on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security;
- The IAEA Women in Nuclear Security Initiative and the IAEA Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellowship Programme
- Efforts to achieve gender parity in the selection of GGE participants, including in particular the GGE on Nuclear Disarmament Verification; and
- The work of the Geneva-based International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, including the publication of a gender resource pack for multilateral practitioners.

Chair,

There is no doubt that civil society has played a pivotal role in raising awareness on a gender perspective in disarmament. Civil society provides advice and ideas that collectively and inclusively encourage us to take meaningful action. We are thankful for their commitment and look forward to our continued collaboration.

In conclusion, Chair, we urge States to collectively incorporate a gender perspective in all efforts related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Such engagement can only improve the functioning of the disarmament machinery and strengthen international peace and security for all.