

DRAFT RESOLUTION

ETHICAL IMPERATIVES FOR A NUCLEAR-WEAPONS-FREE WORLD

The General Assembly,

Recalling the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations that was established to save succeeding generations from the untold suffering of the scourge of war,

Recalling also that the United Nations emerged at the time of the immense trail of death and destruction resulting from the Second World War and the first use of atomic weapons 70 years ago,

Recalling further the noble principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which enjoin the international community - individually and collectively - to spare no effort in promoting the ethical imperative of '*in larger freedom*', so that all peoples may enjoy freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom to live in dignity,

Convinced that given the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and risks associated with a nuclear weapons detonation, Member States have long-envisaged nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, as urgent and interlinked ethical imperatives in achieving the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, and which is reflected in the first resolution 1 (I) adopted by the General Assembly on 24 January of 1946 aimed at the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction,

Acknowledging, in this connection, the ethical imperatives outlined in the provisions of its resolutions and reports, and those of other related international initiatives on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and risks posed by a nuclear weapon detonation, including the declaration that the use of nuclear weapons would cause indiscriminate suffering and as such is a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the laws of humanity and international law¹; the condemnation of nuclear war as contrary to the prerogative of human conscience and a violation of the fundamental right to life²; the threat to the very survival of humankind posed by the existence of nuclear weapons³; the detrimental environmental effects of the use of nuclear weapons⁴; and the disquiet that was expressed at the continued spending on the development and maintenance of nuclear arsenals⁵,

Acknowledging also the preamble and article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty⁶ and the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons⁷,

Acknowledging further the United Nations Millennium Declaration, where Heads of State and Government resolved to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and to keep all options open for achieving this aim, including the possibility of convening an international conference to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers,

Concerned that despite the long-standing recognition it has accorded to these ethical imperatives, while much effort has been directed to addressing nuclear non-proliferation, limited progress has been made in meeting the nuclear disarmament obligations required to achieve and maintain the nuclear-weapons-free world that the international community demands,

Disappointed at the continued absence of progress towards multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament, despite unrelenting efforts of its Member States to this end, and the lack of concrete outcomes of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations within the United Nations framework,

¹ Resolution 1653 (XVI) of 24 November 1961

² Resolution 38/75 of 15 December 1983

³ S-10/2 Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, 27th Plenary Meeting, 30 June 1978 (SSOD1)

⁴ Resolution 50/70 M of 12 December 1995

⁵ A/59/119 The report of the Secretary General, The relationship between disarmament and development in the current international context, 23 June 2004 (Report of the GGE on the relationship between disarmament and development)

⁶ Preamble and Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 5 March 1970

⁷ Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, Advisory Opinion, International Court of Justice, 8 July 1996

Noting with satisfaction, the increasing awareness, renewed attention and growing momentum that has been generated by its Member States and the international community since 2010 regarding the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and risks associated with nuclear weapons, which underpin the ethical imperatives for nuclear disarmament and the urgency of achieving and maintaining a nuclear-weapons-free world, together with all related international initiatives,

Conscious of the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in relation to nuclear disarmament, and determined to promote multilateralism as essential to nuclear disarmament negotiations,

1. *Calls upon* all States to acknowledge the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and risks posed by a nuclear weapon detonation - whether by accident, miscalculation or design;
2. *Acknowledges* the ethical imperatives for nuclear disarmament and the urgency of achieving and maintaining a nuclear-weapons-free world, which is a “*global public good of the highest order*”, serving both national and collective security interests; and
3. *Declares* that:
 - i) The global threat posed by nuclear weapons must urgently be eliminated,
 - ii) Discussions, decisions and actions on nuclear weapons must focus on the effects of these weapons on human beings and the environment, and must be guided by the unspeakable suffering and unacceptable harm that they cause,
 - iii) Greater attention must also be given to the impact of a nuclear weapon detonation on women and the importance of their participation in discussions, decisions and actions on nuclear weapons,
 - iv) Nuclear weapons serve to undermine collective security, heighten the risk of nuclear catastrophe, aggravate international tension and make conflict more dangerous,
 - v) Arguments in favour of the retention of nuclear weapons, impact negatively on the credibility of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime,
 - vi) The long-term plans for the modernisation of nuclear weapons arsenals, run contrary to commitments and obligations to nuclear disarmament, and engender perceptions of the indefinite possession of these weapons,
 - vii) In a world where basic human needs have not yet been met, the vast resources allocated to the modernisation of nuclear arsenals could instead be redirected to meeting the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals,
 - viii) Given the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, it is inconceivable that any use of nuclear weapons, irrespective of the cause, would be compatible with the requirements of international humanitarian law or international law, nor with the laws of morality, or the dictates of public conscience,
 - ix) Given their indiscriminate nature and potential to annihilate humanity, nuclear weapons are inherently immoral;
4. *Notes* that all responsible States have a solemn duty to take decisions that serve to protect their people and each other from the ravages of a nuclear weapon detonation, and that the only way for States to do so is to finally bring an end to the era of nuclear weapons;
5. *Stresses* that all States share an ethical responsibility to act with urgency and determination in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders to take the effective measures necessary to eliminate and prohibit all nuclear weapons, including legally-binding measures, given their catastrophic humanitarian consequences and associated risks;

6. *Decides* also to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-first session, under the item entitled “General and complete disarmament”, the sub-item entitled “Ethical Imperatives for a Nuclear-Weapons-Free World”.