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From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the European Union Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (2022)

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Delegations will find in the Annex the Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the European Union Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (2022), as approved by the Council at its 3972nd meeting on 9 October 2023.

**Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of  
the European Union Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction  
(2022)**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .....	4
INTRODUCTION .....	7
NUCLEAR ISSUES .....	8
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.....	8
The International Atomic Energy Agency.....	10
Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty .....	12
Nuclear Security and Related Issues .....	13
Verification Regimes and Initiatives .....	16
Regional Issues and Aspects .....	16
CHEMICAL WEAPONS .....	20
BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS .....	22
BALLISTIC MISSILES .....	24
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1540.....	26
CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS .....	28
Small Arms and Light Weapons.....	28
Anti-personnel mines.....	31
EXPORT CONTROL REGIMES .....	33
Nuclear Suppliers Group .....	34
Australia Group .....	34
MTCR.....	35
Wassenaar Arrangement.....	35
EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES.....	37
COLLABORATION WITH THINK TANKS AND NGOs .....	39
DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES .....	42

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2022, the international non-proliferation and disarmament regime was subject to ever-greater strain. As multilateral fora started to convene regularly again after two years of disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the illegal war of aggression launched by Russia against Ukraine – grossly violating international law and the principles of the UN Charter – further diminished trust among actors and had a direct and severe impact on all instruments and mechanisms. By spreading disinformation, elevating its aggressive rhetoric, blocking consensus, or reneging on commitments to implement existing instruments – depending on the case –, Russia greatly contributed throughout 2022 to eroding the international non-proliferation and disarmament machinery, thus left facing its greatest challenges in decades.

Confronted with this complex and demanding situation, the EU persevered in applying the guiding principles set in existing strategic documents such as the Global Strategy for the EU's Foreign and Security Policy (doc. 10715/16), the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (doc. 15708/03), or the New Lines for Action (doc. 17172/08), namely:

- effective multilateralism, safeguarding the centrality and the promotion of the universality of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, through diplomatic action and financial assistance to third countries and international organisations;
- close cooperation with countries to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime;
- addressing non-proliferation issues in the EU's bilateral political and non-proliferation and disarmament dialogue meetings, and in more informal contacts; and
- the effective and complementary use of all available instruments and financial resources, in order to underpin EU foreign policy objectives.

In 2022, the EU further strengthened its strategic focus on non-proliferation and disarmament through the adoption of the EU Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, of 21 March (doc. 7371/22). In it, the EU and its Member States commit to, *inter alia*, uphold, support and further advance the disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control framework, in view of global and regional challenges, with a coordinated approach with partners. The Strategic Compass identified among these challenges the DPRK's and Iranian nuclear programmes; the repeated use of chemical weapons; the development and fielding of new advanced ballistic, cruise and hypersonic missiles; the expansion of Russia's and China's nuclear arsenals; Russian nuclear threats in the context of its invasion of Ukraine; and the erosion of the arms control architecture in Europe.

Throughout 2022 the EU, along with its Member States and like-minded partners, defended the global architecture of non-proliferation and disarmament with regard to weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Just days after its launch, the EU denounced Russia's war of aggression and its impact at the Conference on Disarmament. The EU participated actively in the negotiations of a final outcome document at the Tenth Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons – which failed to gather consensus because of the sole opposition of Russia. It contributed to the success of the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention in agreeing on an outcome document and a decision to establish a Working Group of experts, in order to develop a mechanism to review and assess scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention and to restart the work on verification, among other key aspects.

Regarding conventional weapons, the EU contributed to the work of the main multilateral fora aimed at preventing and curbing their illicit trafficking (Arms Trade Treaty, United Nations Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention). It continued pursuing capacity building projects on physical security, stockpile management, marking, record-keeping or tracing in several regions of the world. In particular, the EU maintained in 2022 its cooperation with Ukraine regarding the threats deriving from diversion and illicit trafficking of SALW.

The EU carried on firmly defending multilateral export control regimes as a vital element in the fight against proliferation, and contributed to international efforts towards governing emerging technologies with a potential impact on disarmament. In all these strands of work, the EU maintained a constant dialogue with third countries and cooperated closely with civil society. It also continued to promote cross-cutting priorities, such as supporting and advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women across the whole realm of non-proliferation and disarmament.

## INTRODUCTION

This report reflects progress made in 2022 in the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, adopted by the European Council in December 2003 (doc. 15708/03), complemented by the "New lines for action by the European Union in combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems", as endorsed by the Council on 8-9 December 2008 (doc. 17172/08). For the sake of completeness, further aspects regarding conventional weapons are also touched upon.

This report is non-exhaustive and focuses on the main developments.

Under the direction of the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European External Action Service (EEAS) actively contributes to this joint effort, along with Member States and the European Commission. The EU Special Envoy for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and her team work with third countries, international organisations, and civil society, in order to reduce global weapons stockpiles, prevent their diversion to criminals and terrorists, and regulate the development of new weapons agents and technologies.

The Council Working Party on Non-Proliferation and Arms Exports, both in its disarmament and non-proliferation (CONOP) and conventional arms exports (COARM) subgroups, plays a vital role in coordinating EU positions, upholding international agreements, and advancing non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. EU Delegations in Vienna, Geneva and New York represent the EU in non-proliferation and disarmament fora, prepare and coordinate dozens of EU statements, and organise side-events to promote the EU's objectives, contributing to policy-making.

## NUCLEAR ISSUES

Over the course of 2022 the EU remained fully committed to its long-standing objectives in the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation realm, including the universalisation and the full, complete and effective implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the entry into force and the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations, at the Conference on Disarmament, on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East also continued to be a priority. Last but not least, the EU strongly supported the work of the UN Disarmament Commission Working Group I on nuclear issues.

Russia's behaviour in the context of its aggression against Ukraine, in grave violation of international law, including the security assurances it gave to Ukraine under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, gravely affected multilateral work in this area, including disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses. The EU and its Member States, in coordination with like-minded partners, called out Russia's nuclear threats, disinformation and blatant disregard for the safety and security in and around nuclear facilities in Ukraine, and worked with the rest of the international community in an effort to preserve and further consolidate the international regime in this area. The EU also denounced the change in Belarus' non-nuclear status as another worrying development, which adds to unacceptable attempts to re-define the rules-based European security architecture.

### **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains for the EU the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT and an important element in the development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes in accordance with Article IV of the NPT. All EU Members States are States Parties to it.



After being postponed three times because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Tenth Review Conference of the NPT took place in New York on 1-26 August 2022. The EU participated actively in the Review Conference, delivering six statements, intervening in negotiations in the three Main Committees, coordinating the action of its Member States, submitting working papers<sup>1</sup> and organising side events<sup>2</sup> to further the political objectives contained in the [Council Conclusions on the 10th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons \(NPT\)](#), approved on 15 November 2021. These include the commitment to advance nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, support for intensified dialogue to promote further progress in disarmament, the benefits of concrete work on strategic and nuclear risk reduction, the value of multilateral cooperation advancing nuclear disarmament verification, and the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. Furthermore, the EU denounced the blatant violation by Russia of the Budapest Memorandum, reckless threats of using nuclear weapons and other irresponsible acts against nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, in particular its illegal seizure of the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, as detrimental to the NPT.

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<sup>1</sup> The EU submitted two working papers for the Review Conference: “*Priorities of the European Union for the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*” and “*Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty for the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons*”.

<sup>2</sup> The following side-events were organised or co-organised by the EU: “*Reinforcing the global nuclear security architecture: Universalization of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT)*”, with the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT); “*European Union Support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its Organization*”; “*Safeguarding in a regional arrangement*”; and “*Narratives on the Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone: Historical accounts, drivers, and themes*”, with the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

Despite the efforts of the EU and its Member States, like-minded partners and other States Parties, who engaged in substantive discussions with the purpose of reaffirming the importance of the NPT, reviewing its implementation and identifying future actions, a final consensus document could not be adopted, due to the sole opposition of Russia regarding references in the text to Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. It was agreed that the next NPT Review Conference will take place in 2026 in New York, sessions of the Preparatory Committee will be held in 2023 in Vienna, in 2024 in Geneva and in 2025 in New York, and a working group on further strengthening the review process will be established.

### **The International Atomic Energy Agency**

The EU attaches great importance to the technical, independent and impartial work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) across its mandate covering both nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. The EU supports the IAEA and its Member States in multiple ways. Besides political support, the EU and its Member States are among the largest donors to the Agency, including its Technical Cooperation Fund. Moreover, since 2003 the EU has supported the IAEA's activities with more than € 60 million through eight consecutive Council Decisions. The latest of them currently running is Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1656, of 6 November 2020, on Union support for the activities of the IAEA in the areas of nuclear security and in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction ('IAEA VIII'). It includes strong financial support to the IAEA's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme that aims to encourage young women to study and work in nuclear science and technology, nuclear safety and security, non-proliferation, and nuclear law.

In 2022, due to the severe impact of Russia's aggression against Ukraine on nuclear safety and security, € 2.2 million from the budget of Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1656 were reallocated for *Assistance to Ukraine in ensuring the maintenance of its nuclear security regime*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/1852, of 4 October 2022.

The IAEA safeguards system is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the Agency's verification activities play an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. The EU supports the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system and remains of the view that Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, together with the Additional Protocol, constitute the current verification standard under the NPT and continues to call for universal adherence to them. During 2022, outreach to third countries focused on promoting the universalization of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and its Additional Protocol, as well as that of the Amended Small Quantities Protocol (SQP).

The close cooperation between EURATOM and the IAEA based on the 1973 IAEA/EURATOM Agreement allows for the implementation of effective and efficient safeguards in Europe.

The EU actively supports the IAEA safeguards system, including financial support for the IAEA Network of Analytical Laboratories, as well as the promotion of State System for Accountancy and Control of nuclear materials (SSAC) in partner countries. The European Safeguards Research and Development Association (ESARDA), operated by the European Commission, also continues its international outreach through its Memorandums of Understanding with the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE) and the Asian Pacific Safeguards Network in close collaboration with the Institute for Nuclear Materials Management. In this framework, a large training and education project is funded in the area of nuclear safeguards with the European Nuclear Education Network (ENEN), including the first-ever academic postgraduate programme on nuclear safeguards – in cooperation with the IAEA. In 2022, a new ambitious EU programme was launched aimed at uplifting nuclear safeguards in Africa, in cooperation with AFCONE and Finland.

The EU has allocated EUR 300 million under the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation over the period 2021-2027 to promote nuclear safety, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards in third countries, including in the Central Asian region.

The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the IAEA continued to implement 'Practical Arrangements on Cooperation on Nuclear Science Applications' signed in 15 February 2017, aimed at developing joint activities and avoiding duplication of efforts inter alia on areas such as soil sciences, medical applications, ocean science, nuclear data and reference materials, food safety, earth observation and environmental monitoring.

The EU and its Member States continue to be strong supporters of the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, including through substantial contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund and the Peaceful Uses Initiative, which are important tools to enable the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technology and to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The EU and the IAEA regularly hold annual Senior Officials Meetings (SOM) to review and plan their broad-range cooperation. While the 2020 and 2021 annual meetings could not be held due to the pandemic, close contact was maintained and the 2022 SOM meeting took place in Vienna on 15 March.

### **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty**

The entry into force and universalisation of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) are key objectives of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. All EU Member States have demonstrated their commitment to the Treaty by ratifying it and, pending its entry into force, by already adhering to its objectives. The CTBT is a strong confidence and security building measure, contributing to both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

In 2022, the EU engaged in diplomatic activities in support of the CTBT and has repeatedly called for the ratification of the Treaty in its statements in related fora, as well as in its bilateral contacts with the relevant Annex II and non-Annex II countries, including at the Friends of the CTBT meeting in New York in September 2022. Promoting its entry into force is among the actions in the UN Secretary General's "Securing our Common Future: an Agenda for Disarmament" that the EU decided to support.

The EU consistently promotes the benefits and contributions of the CTBT to peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation, including in its civil applications. The steadfast political and financial commitment of the EU to the Treaty and its Organisation continued in 2022 through the implementation of Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/901 on Union support for the activities of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO in order to strengthen its monitoring and verification capabilities. The EU's financial support to the CTBT contributed to maintaining and strengthening the International Monitoring System (IMS) through the provision of technical support, capacity building and facilitation of expert participation in CTBTO meetings, in particular to developing countries. The EU participated actively in the sessions of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission and its Working Groups A and B.

## **Nuclear Security and Related Issues**

The EU stresses the need to continue strengthening nuclear security worldwide in order to prevent nuclear terrorism and facilitate peaceful uses of nuclear technology. The EU continues to fully support the outcome of the International Conference on Nuclear Security (ICONS 2020), held in February 2020. Its Ministerial Declaration reiterates the commitment to sustain and strengthen effective and comprehensive nuclear security of all nuclear and other radioactive material and facilities, and recognises the IAEA's central role in facilitating and coordinating international cooperation in the area of nuclear security. The EU commenced preparations for the next ICONS meeting taking place in May 2024.

The EU condemned in the strongest possible terms, in multiple statements at the IAEA General Conference and the Board of Governors, Russia's unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine, which poses serious and direct threats to nuclear safety and security and safeguards verification activities in Ukraine. The EU supported the diplomatic activities of the IAEA Director General to ensure nuclear safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities and the continued presence of the IAEA support and assistance missions at all Ukrainian nuclear power plants to which the EU financially contributed.

The EU assisted Ukraine both bilaterally and through the IAEA. Since the start of the war, the EU is one of the main donors to Ukraine, having provided it with nearly €53 million in nuclear safety and nuclear security related assistance, of which €5.6 million through the IAEA, including €2.2 million under the amendment of Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1656.

In 2022, under the European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC), €13 million were committed for Ukraine, as well as an additional €3.4 million to the IAEA to support, inter alia, the deployment of IAEA staff at the main nuclear facilities in the country, bilateral assistance to restore monitoring and analytical capabilities, as well as renewed financing to the Joint Support Office in Kyiv. The EU is also currently the biggest donor of the International Chernobyl Cooperation Account (ICCA) to reconstruct nuclear safety related infrastructure.

The EU considers it important that all States accede to key nuclear safety and nuclear security instruments, such as the Amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (A/CPPNM),<sup>4</sup> the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT), the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS)<sup>5</sup> or the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Management (JC).<sup>6</sup> The EU will continue to support States in their efforts to fully implement these conventions.

The EU significantly contributed to and welcomed the consensual [outcome document](#) of the A/CPPNM review meeting, achieved in spite of the grave political situation in March 2022. The grave nuclear safety and security threats stemming from Russia's aggression against Ukraine were addressed in a [stand-alone document](#) initiated by the EU that received wide support among States Parties.

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<sup>4</sup> All EU Member States are parties to the A/CPPNM.

<sup>5</sup> All EU Member States are parties to the CNS.

<sup>6</sup> All EU Member States are parties to the JC.

The EU continued to support in 2022 the universalization and effective implementation of ICSANT through Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1939 of 10 December 2018, implemented by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The objectives of the Council Decision are to increase the number of adherents to ICSANT, to raise awareness among national policy- and decision-makers, as well as capacity-building: to help improve national legislation and to strengthen the capacity of national stakeholders, including criminal justice officials to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases of nuclear terrorism. Together with Canada and UNODC, the EU sponsored the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary event of ICSANT in Vienna on 12 December 2022.

The EU continued to support the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and its mission to strengthen global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism. The EU and its Member States are actively involved in the work of the GICNT in all areas: nuclear detection, nuclear forensics, and response and mitigation.

The EU has Practical Arrangements signed in 2013 with the IAEA for Cooperation on Nuclear Security Technical Issues, which aim at increasing coordination of training and capacity-building activities for promoting and implementing sustainable Nuclear Security Culture practices, among other objectives. The EU Nuclear Security Training Centre for the detection and response to illicit acts involving nuclear and other radioactive materials (EUSECTRA) has been fully operational since 2013 for the benefit of European Union Member States and partner countries, among them several GICNT members. The Centre is also used for practical exercises, mainly related to countering nuclear smuggling, as well as for nuclear forensics activities on the characterisation of intercepted nuclear material. The European Commission also continues to play a major role within the Border Monitoring Working Group (BMWG) for nuclear security. It co-chairs both the BMWG and its two sub groups on Detection Technologies and Capacity Building.

## **Verification Regimes and Initiatives**

The EU believes that further development of multilateral nuclear disarmament verification capabilities could assist in the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. In this context, the EU and its Member States fully supported the establishment of the UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, as well as the decision to continue its work in 2022 and 2023 to make up for sessions that could not be held due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The EU continued its participation in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), which held in Brussels on 27-29 June 2022 its first in-person meeting in over two years, the JUNEX 22 tabletop exercise. The IPNDV held its Plenary in Sydney (Australia) on 5-9 December 2022, where partners assessed progress made in its third phase of work, focused on assessing verification concepts through scenario-based applications and identifying and evaluating technologies that serve verification goals.

## **Regional Issues and Aspects**

### ***Iran / JCPOA***

Despite political support by the EU Member States and intense international diplomatic efforts to restore the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) including negotiations in Vienna, facilitated by the EU High Representative as Coordinator of the JCPOA Joint Commission, no agreement could be reached in the course of 2022. Successive IAEA reports documented the alarming acceleration of Iran's nuclear programme, gravely departing from its JCPOA commitments, in particular with regard to the expansion of its nuclear enrichment capacity and production of highly enriched uranium. Concerning the outstanding safeguards issues (uranium particles identified at three undeclared locations), the IAEA Board of Governors adopted resolutions on 8 June and 17 November 2022 calling upon Iran to cooperate with the Agency.



In the meantime, the EU also continued to support the IAEA's long-term mission to verify and monitor Iran's nuclear-related commitments. The EU continued to cooperate with Iran in the civil nuclear field under Annex III of the JCPOA in the field of nuclear safety. Such cooperation includes support for the Iranian nuclear safety regulator (INRA), stress tests for the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant, and the supply of equipment for Iran's INRA Nuclear Safety Centre. The JCPOA Procurement Channel, which reviews transfers of nuclear or dual-use items to Iran, remains operational.

In [Council Conclusions of 12 December 2022](#), the EU reaffirmed its commitment to, and continued support for, the full and effective implementation of a restored JCPOA, and called on all countries to support the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015). The EU High Representative, in its role as coordinator of the JCPOA, remains fully committed to working with the international community to preserve the JCPOA and ensure its full implementation.

### ***Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)***

Throughout 2022, the EU underlined that each of the unprecedented number of launches of ballistic missiles by the DPRK represented a blatant violation of UN Security Council resolutions and posed a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. Statements by the High Representative on behalf of the EU in April and November condemned the DPRK's resumption of intercontinental ballistic missile launches. EU statements also expressed solidarity with the Republic of Korea and Japan in the face of the DPRK launching new and older types of short-range missiles and stating that some of them could be used to deliver nuclear warheads. The EU made clear that such actions, along with the continuing activity at the DPRK's nuclear sites, would never be accepted as legitimate. The EU insisted that the only route to sustainable peace and security lay in the DPRK taking action to comply with its obligation to abandon all its nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missile programmes and existing nuclear programmes, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and cease all related activities.

EU Member States continued to encourage all members of the United Nations, especially members of the Security Council, to urge the DPRK to change course, emphasising that the most effective instrument to achieve this is the full implementation of UN Security Council sanctions. As the Security Council continued to fail to take action, the EU increased consultations with partners on other ways to restrict flows of finance, knowledge and components into the DPRK that could be used to support its illegal weapons programmes. In this vein, the EU adopted additional restrictive measures vis-à-vis DPRK individuals and entities in April and December. In addition to the 80 individuals and 75 entities listed under UN Security Council sanctions, 73 individuals and 17 entities were then subject to EU restrictive measures.

The EU made full use of opportunities in international non-proliferation fora to call on the DPRK to return immediately to full compliance with the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state and the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, bring into force the Additional Protocol and sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The EU continued to insist that the situation could only be solved through peaceful means. The EU urged the DPRK to resume dialogue with the main parties and reiterated its readiness to support or facilitate a new process of diplomacy aimed at the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

### ***Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction***

Committed to the implementation of the Resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference, the EU was encouraged by the outcome of the third UN Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, held in New York from 14 to 18 November 2022.

Through Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/938, of 6 June 2019, in support of a process of confidence-building leading to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, freely agreed to by all states in the region, the EU supported throughout 2022 UNIDIR's Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone Project, aimed at filling an important research gap on how the issue has evolved over time, building analytic capacity to support new thinking on regional security issues and the zone, collecting ideas and developing new proposals on how to move forward, and fostering inclusive dialogue among experts and policymakers on regional security issues and the zone. By the end of the year, the EU began discussions on a phase II of the project, aiming at continuing its support to the zone beyond 2022.

## CHEMICAL WEAPONS

The 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2022 marked the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (CWC). In a declaration issued on the occasion on behalf of the EU, the High Representative recalled that the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, at any time and under any circumstances constitutes a violation of international law and can amount to the most serious crimes of international concern – war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Throughout 2022, the EU remained fully committed to countering the proliferation of chemical weapons and supporting the fight against impunity for the use of chemical weapons. The EU maintained its strong political, diplomatic and voluntary financial support to the Organisation of the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), the implementing body of the CWC. The support was expressed in statements, demarches and voluntary financial contributions through Council Decisions. Voluntary financial contributions benefitted the OPCW's core activities, notably in verification and capacity building, OPCW's operations through the provisions of satellite imagery, as well as the updating of the OPCW's cyber security and information protection capacities. The EU and its Member States remained the biggest voluntary financial contributors supporting the establishment of the OPCW's new laboratory, the Centre for Chemistry and Technology.

On 14 November 2022, the EU imposed further restrictive measures linked to the poisoning of Alexei Navalny and the production of chemical weapons delivery systems in Syria.<sup>7</sup> By the end of 2022, measures under the EU's chemical weapons sanctions regime applied to a total of 25 individuals and 3 entities.

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<sup>7</sup> Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2022/2228 of 14 November 2022 implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/1542 concerning restrictive measures against the proliferation and use of chemical weapons.

In the OPCW context, as part of its aggression against Ukraine, Russia engaged in a campaign of disinformation and state-controlled propaganda in spreading unsubstantiated and unfounded allegations against Ukraine and others regarding chemical weapons programmes. Countering Russian disinformation, the EU in its statements recalled that it is well established that Ukraine is a responsible member of, and in full compliance with the Chemical Weapons Convention.

## BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) prohibits the development, production, acquisition, transfer, stockpiling and use of biological and toxin weapons. It was the first multilateral disarmament treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. All EU Member States are States Parties to the BTWC.

The EU and its Member States contributed actively to the Ninth Review Conference of the BTWC, held in Geneva between 27 November and 16 December 2022. It was a significant achievement that the then 184 States Parties were able to agree on a final document, especially taking into account the global tensions and deadlock in other fora in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. One of the key results was the decision to establish a Working Group that between 2023 and 2026 will identify specific and effective measures, including possible legally-binding ones, on mechanisms on implementation of cooperation and assistance under Article X and on a Scientific and Technological Advisory Board, in addition to renewed discussions on compliance and verification, and make recommendations to strengthen and institutionalise the Convention in all its aspects.

During 2022, the EU played an active role in countering Russia's disinformation campaign related to biological weapons that included using mechanisms foreseen under Articles V and VI of the BTWC for the purposes of spreading disinformation in an attempt to justify its aggression against Ukraine.

In line with the EU Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and as a long-term backer of the BTWC, the EU continued in 2022 its consistent support through the implementation of two Council Decisions, funding UNODA activities in support of capacity building to strengthen BTWC national implementation, fostering biosecurity networks in the Global South, supporting the inter-sessional programme and preparations for the Ninth Review Conference, strengthening the preparedness of States Parties to prevent and respond to attacks involving biological agents and enabling tools for outreach, education and engagement. In 2022, the EU also continued to support the UNODA initiative “Youth for Biosecurity”. Another important aspect of EU support was related to the universalisation of the Convention. In 2022, the EU helped to fund a UN universalisation workshop for Africa and carried out an EU universalisation demarche targeting countries that were not yet States Parties to the Convention.

## BALLISTIC MISSILES

The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) is the only multilateral transparency and confidence building instrument relating to ballistic missiles. States that subscribe to HCoC voluntarily commit themselves to provide pre-launch notifications on ballistic missile and space-launch vehicle launches and to submit an annual declaration on their policies on ballistic missiles and space-launch vehicles.

The EU has strongly supported HCoC since its inception. All EU Member States have subscribed to it and the EU regularly reaches out to non-subscribing States in support of its further universalisation. At present, 144 UN Member States have subscribed to the Code. Through a number of consecutive Council Decisions, the EU has since 2008 financed HCoC outreach activities, side events, research papers, expert meetings and regional awareness seminars. These activities are carried out by the Paris-based *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique*, usually also involving the HCoC Chair. A new Council Decision, extending EU support through a new action until 2026, was prepared throughout 2022.<sup>8</sup> The main objectives of the action are to promote universality, full implementation, as well as a better insertion of the Hague Code of Conduct into efforts to curb the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Regular Meeting (ARM) of the Hague Code of Conduct in Vienna on 30 and 31 May 2022 took place against the backdrop of the Russian full-scale military invasion of Ukraine. At the meeting, the EU and its Member States reaffirmed their strong support for the HCoC, its universalisation, full implementation and efficient functioning.<sup>9</sup> There was no press release by the HCoC subscribing States from the meeting, in contrast with the preceding ARM meetings.

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<sup>8</sup> [It was adopted by the Council on 17 January 2023 as Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2023/124](#)

<sup>9</sup> [EU Statement at the 21st Annual Regular Meeting of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation \(HCoC\) as delivered on 30 May 2022](#)



In 2022, the 20th anniversary of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) provided an opportunity for the EU to increase international attention for the Code, including by a strengthened outreach to those States which have still not subscribed to it.<sup>10</sup> The EU, the Netherlands and France marked this anniversary by holding an international outreach event on HCoC on 1 June in Vienna, and organising a space launch site transparency visit – a key transparency measure of HCoC – to the European Space Port in Kourou in French Guiana in November.

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<sup>10</sup> [EU joins forces to address ballistic missile proliferation](#)

## UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1540

The EU considers Security Council Resolution 1540 a central pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture, a key part of the global efforts to prevent the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, including to terrorists and other non-state actors.

The protection against the proliferation of materials and know-how requires not only implementation through national legislation, but also that it be executed and monitored across borders and sectors. The EU works with partner countries to strengthen their capacity to adhere to the provisions of Resolution 1540 and supports the UN agencies in their work to promote understanding and compliance.

The EU was actively engaged in the Open Consultations of the Comprehensive Review of UNSCR 1540 that took place in New York on 31 May- 2 June 2022. The EU welcomed the new ten-year mandate for the Committee provided by Resolution 2663 (2022) adopted on 30 November 2022 and the decision that the Committee would review its internal guidelines on matters regarding its Group of Experts. The EU was pleased to see that the new Resolution 2663 (2022) for the first time emphasizes the meaningful participation of women to further strengthen the Committee's work.

EU support to the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540 by UN Member States includes notably the following:

- The EU Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) Centres of Excellence Initiative provides significant assistance to mitigate risks from accidental, natural or criminal incidents in partner countries. This needs- and demand-driven initiative strengthens all-hazards security governance, both at national and regional levels. With a budget of almost 150 million USD in 2021-28, the CBRN Centres of Excellence supports capacity building also through real-time, cross-border exercises with 64 countries.

- The EU helps States mitigate CBRN risks through the EU Partner-to-Partner Export Control Programme for Dual-Use Goods, which focuses on reducing the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by strengthening international cooperation in the field of dual-use trade controls and strengthening national and regional capacity.
- EU support from the CFSP budget to other States specifically related to the implementation of Resolution 1540 has since 2006 been channelled through two Council Joint Actions and four CFSP Council Decisions (see Annex II). This support has contributed to diminishing the number of non-reporting States and the number of States that did not submit additional information required by the 1540 Committee following their submission of incomplete reports. By 2022, this support had amounted to a total of nearly 9 million EUR.
- The EU helps third countries implement their obligations under Resolution 1540 through the implementation of multilateral non-proliferation Treaties. This support from the CFSP budget takes place through bilateral cooperation and assistance partnerships and support to the UN and regional organisations. This support to non-proliferation efforts focuses notably on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the UN Secretary General's Mechanism for the investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological weapons (UNSGM) and the Hague Code of Conduct.
- It is also worth highlighting the importance in the context of UNSCR 1540 of export controls to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Resolution calls on States to establish, develop and maintain appropriate effective national export and trans-shipment controls over materials related to nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons, or their means of delivery, and to take cooperative action to prevent their illicit trafficking. The EU actively participates in all multilateral WMD-related export control regimes, as well as in the work of the G7 Global Partnership initiative against the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

## CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

### Small Arms and Light Weapons

In line with its 2018 Strategy on illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition “Securing arms, protecting citizens”, the EU remained in 2022 fully committed to preventing and curbing the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition and to promoting accountability and responsibility with regard to their legal trade.

Over the course of 2022, the EU continued pursuing several classic SALW-control projects, with a focus on voluntary civilian disarmament campaigns, collection and destruction of surplus SALW and ammunition, physical security and stockpile management for SALW and ammunition, and capacity building for marking, record keeping and tracing. Most of these projects have a regional scope and were implemented with the help of regional organisations.

Supporting Ukraine in defending its national sovereignty and territorial integrity against the illegal and unprovoked Russian military aggression by providing weaponry of various kinds to Ukraine was a political priority and strategic necessity for the EU and its Member States. EU Member States agreed that the export of the military equipment to Ukraine is fully in line with the legal obligations stemming from the Common Position 2008/944/CFSP on arms export and with obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty, as well as with the Wassenaar Arrangement Initial Elements, which stipulate that “this Arrangement will not interfere with the rights of states to acquire legitimate means with which to defend themselves pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations”. These norms prohibit exports towards an aggressor, not towards a state victim of external aggression. Given the many grave breaches by Russia of the Geneva Conventions, including attacks directed against population and civilian objects, arms transfers to Russia would not be permitted under the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The EU has continuously urged all States Parties to the ATT to refrain from any transfers to Russia.

Records of SALW and other military equipment is a national responsibility. Military equipment, weapons and ammunitions provided under the European Peace Facility by EU Member States have been cautiously recorded by the EEAS, based on the delivery verification certificate signed by the Ukrainian authorities and provided by the EU Member States implementing actors. Furthermore, there was a long standing cooperation between the EU and Ukraine regarding the threats deriving from diversion and illicit trafficking of SALW. In 2022, the main EU funded projects in support of Ukraine's efforts to combat illicit trafficking in SALW, ammunition and explosives are EU Council Decisions (CFSP) 2018/1788 and 2019/2111 with SEESAC (UNDP) as main implementer, Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2009 with OSCE as main implementer and Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2191 in support of iTrace IV.

Ukraine was identified in the EU Action Plan on Firearms Trafficking 2020-2025 as a key region for specific actions at the external level. Within that framework, Ukraine had participated in the last EU-Western Balkans ministerial conference in September 2021 on Countering Firearms Trafficking in South East Europe, implementing the specific actions for South East Europe of the EU Action Plan on Firearms Trafficking, including the implementation of the Roadmap for comprehensive SALW control, as well as that on National Firearms Focal Points.

In 2022, in line with the regional priorities set out in the EU SALW Strategy, the EU continued to support Western Balkan Partners through EU Council Decisions (CFSP) 2018/1788 and 2019/2111 with SEESAC (UNDP) as main implementer. The Western Balkans remains the largest recipient of EU regional support to conventional arms control. The implementation of the Western Balkans Roadmap against Illicit Arms Trafficking remained an EU priority. Furthermore, the successful regional Roadmap approach in the Western Balkans has become a blueprint for other regional conventional arms control initiatives.

The EU actively participated in 8th Biennial Meeting of States on the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (New York, 27 June – 1 July 2022). The EU delivered statements on all three substantive agenda items and actively intervened in the consultations on the outcome document.

The working paper submitted by the EU prior to the meeting enabled many EU objectives to be reflected in the outcome document. However, the position supported by the EU and majority of participating states regarding issues such as the inclusion of ammunition within the scope of the PoA, the language on the open-ended technical expert working group, and a reference on “synergies” between the PoA and the Arms Trade Treaty and Firearms Protocol did not find a consensus.

Since 2013, the EU has been supporting iTrace, a global reporting mechanism on illicit SALW and other illicit conventional weapons and ammunition in conflict affected areas. During the reporting period, ITrace conducted field operations in conflict areas in the Middle East, West and East Africa, the Gulf, Central Asia and Ukraine, assisting efforts to disrupt illicit trade in arms and ammunition. Operations in Ukraine comprehensively documented and traced Russian and Iranian advanced weapons systems.

Supporting and advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women are at the core of EU policies, both at home and abroad. In line with its SALW strategy, the EU systematically applies gender mainstreaming in the design of new projects relating to the fight against gun violence and SALW control in general. In addition, the EU continued supporting the development of an internationally recognised arms and ammunition management validation system to prevent illicit proliferation.

The Union also continued, through various political dialogues, to promote the ATT’s universalization and effective implementation. The EU maintained its financial support for the Treaty’s implementation support programme, providing countries in Africa, Latin America, and South-East and Central Asia with technical assistance in strengthening their national systems in line with the Treaty’s requirements, and sustained its support for the ATT secretariat. The EU also continued to promote effective arms export controls among countries in South and East Europe, Caucasus, Middle East and North Africa, as well as Central Asia.

## Anti-personnel mines

In 2022, the EU continued to contribute to human security by supporting the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan 2020-2024 adopted by the States Parties at the Fourth Review Conference of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction. By means of Council Decision 2021/257, the EU pursued the following objectives: (a) to support the efforts of States Parties to implement the survey and clearance and mine risk education and reduction aspects of the Oslo Action Plan; (b) to support the efforts of States Parties to implement the victim assistance aspects of the Oslo Action Plan; (c) to promote the universalisation of the Convention and promote norms against any use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destruction; (d) to support the efforts of States Parties that retain anti-personnel mines for permitted purposes to increase reporting capabilities, ensure that the number of such mines retained does not exceed the minimum number absolutely necessary, and explore alternatives to live anti-personnel mines for training and research purposes where possible; and (e) to demonstrate the ongoing commitment of the EU and its Member States to the Convention and their resolve to cooperate with and extend assistance to those States Parties that need support in meeting their commitments under the Convention, thereby enhancing the EU's leading role in pursuing the Convention's vision of a conclusive end to the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines.

While celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signature of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and its large success, the mine ban community, including States Parties, international organisations, civil society, landmine survivors and mine clearance operators during the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the States Parties showcased its strong determination to reach the goal of a mine-free world by 2025. With the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant decrease in global funding in mine action and broad security challenges, including the recent use of anti-personnel mines by Russia in Ukraine, this goal becomes more elusive, although the commitment prevails.

The EU is one of the largest donors to mine clearance, victim assistance and in support of the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan. In addition to promoting the EU's support through four EU statements, the EU was recognized as the most important partner in support of reintegration of landmine victims in the daily life, particularly through projects in Colombia, Guinea Bissau, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Cambodia.



## EXPORT CONTROL REGIMES

The EU fully supports the existing multilateral export control regimes (Australia Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement, and Zangger Committee).<sup>11</sup> It stresses their crucial role in preventing the proliferation of WMDs and their means of delivery, implementing UNSC embargoes, and promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies, thus preventing destabilizing accumulations. The EU contributes to the full implementation of strong non-proliferation mechanisms under the Treaties and UNSC resolutions by promoting robust export controls and related legislations worldwide. The EU also provides widespread support to partner countries in setting up or enhancing their own export control systems to implement UNSC Resolution 1540, through the CBRN Centers of Excellence and the EU P2P ATT Program. Multilateral export control regimes foster the legitimate transfer of dual-use goods and technologies that are essential to international cooperation on peaceful uses.

With this in mind, the EU continued to oppose in the UNGA First Committee the Chinese resolution “Promoting International Cooperation on Peaceful Uses in the Context of International Security”, including by global outreach and meeting with regional groups of UN Member States ahead of voting. The EU perceives the resolution as an attempt to undermine export control regimes by falsely labelling as ‘undue restrictions’ on peaceful uses those export controls which are necessary and required under legally-binding international instruments for non-proliferation purposes. No evidence supports the claim that the existing non-proliferation export controls and multilateral export control regimes are misused to the detriment of peaceful uses or that they inhibit sustainable development.

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<sup>11</sup> The EU is a participant in the Australia Group and a permanent observer in the Zangger Committee. The European Commission is an observer in the Nuclear Suppliers' Group. At the same time, in all five export control regimes the EU provides political coordination of the positions of EU Member States participating in them, for instance in order to deliver statements on behalf of the EU.

## **Nuclear Suppliers Group**

The Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) seeks to contribute to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of two sets of Guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports, which are implemented by each Participating Government in accordance with its national laws and practices on licensing requirements. All EU Member States are Participating Governments to the NSG. The European Commission participates as an observer.

Deliberations within the NSG are subject to confidentiality. The EU participated actively in the 2022 Plenary (Warsaw, 23-24 June) with representatives of the European Commission (TRADE/JRC) and the EEAS. For the first time in the NSG's history, no public statement was adopted.

## **Australia Group**

The Australia Group (AG) is a like-minded group of like-minded countries seeking to harmonise export controls for chemicals, biological agents and related dual-use technologies. It has 43 members, including the EU and all EU Member States.

Deliberations within the AG are subject to confidentiality. In 2022, the AG resumed in-person meetings after the COVID-19 pandemic. The EU participated actively at the AG Plenary in Paris on 4-8 July, including in the discussions on the threat of use by Russia of chemical and biological weapons and attacks at and in the vicinity of civil biological and chemical facilities in Ukraine, and on the shared concern over Russia's unsubstantiated claims about chemical and biological weapons, including claims against Ukraine and the United States.

## **MTCR**

The Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) is an informal and voluntary association of countries sharing the goals of non-proliferation of unmanned delivery systems capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, and which seek to coordinate national export licensing efforts aimed at preventing proliferation. The MTCR has a crucial role to play in tackling the proliferation of ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and unmanned aerial vehicle technologies. At present, 18 EU member states are members of MTCR. An issue of fundamental importance for the EU in the MTCR context is the blocked accession of nine EU Member States: Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. The single set of EU export control rules under the EU Export Control Regulation implements MTCR guidelines and control lists and ensures that they are effectively applied in all EU Member States, including those that are not yet members of the MTCR.

Deliberations within MTCR are subject to confidentiality. The EU has always supported the adoption of strong MTCR public statements reflecting international concerns about the ballistic missile launches and significant missile technology development by notably Iran and the DPRK. The 2022 MTCR plenary meeting took place under Swiss Chairmanship in Montreux on 17-21 October. There was no MTCR public statement published after the meeting. On 8 November 2022, a [“Message on the Occasion of the 35th Anniversary of the Missile Control Regime”](#), adopted by MTCR partners, was published.

## **Wassenaar Arrangement**

The Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) was established in order to contribute to regional and international security and stability, by promoting transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies. Participating States apply export controls to all items set forth in the List of Dual-Use Goods and Technologies and the Munitions List, which they regularly review, with the objective of preventing unauthorized transfers or re-transfers of those items.

Both lists form the basis of the EU Dual-Use Control List and the EU Common Military List, respectively, which are updated regularly by the Council following WA decisions. Participating States seek, through their national policies, to ensure that transfers of these items do not contribute to the development or enhancement of military capabilities which undermine these goals, and are not diverted to support such capabilities nor acquired by terrorists. Participating States also regularly exchange information and are required to report their arms transfers and transfers/denials of certain dual-use goods and technologies to destinations outside the Arrangement on a regular basis. WA has 42 participating states, including 26 EU member states.

Deliberations within the WA are subject to confidentiality. In 2022 the WA Plenary meeting took place on 30 November and 1 December in Vienna, the first since 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It agreed updates to both of the regime's control lists.

## EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

In 2022, the EU has continued developing its understanding of emerging technologies with a potential impact on international security and disarmament and participating in international efforts to govern them and manage the possible risks they might pose.

In 2022, the EU adopted two Council Decisions on this specific area:

- Through Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2269, of 18 November 2022, on Union support for the implementation by UNODA and SIPRI of a joint project ‘Promoting Responsible Innovation in Artificial Intelligence for Peace and Security’, the EU supports greater engagement of the civilian artificial intelligence (AI) community in mitigating the risks that the diversion and misuse of civilian AI research and innovation by irresponsible actors may pose to international peace and security.
- Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2320, of 25 November 2022, on Union support for the implementation of a project ‘Unlocking Innovation: Enabling Technologies and International Security’, supports the work that UNIDIR conducts within its Security and Technology Programme, with a view to enhancing knowledge and understanding of new and emerging technologies with relevance for international security.

The necessity of ensuring that all weapons, also in the area of emerging technologies, comply with international law, and in particular International Humanitarian Law (IHL), taking into account relevant ethical considerations, continued to occupy the EU. The EU continued to promote its position that human responsibility for decisions over the use of weapons should be maintained and that human accountability must be preserved at all times and across the entire lifecycle of a weapons system.

Throughout 2022, the EU continued participating in the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (GGE LAWS), under the framework of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The EU supported work evolving at the GGE on a two-tier approach to the regulation of LAWS, distinguishing weapons systems based on emerging technologies in the area of LAWS that cannot be used in accordance with the rules and principles of IHL, and systems that include autonomous features but can be used in accordance with IHL. The EU was disappointed that, despite significant conceptual progress, no substantial report to the CCW State Parties could be agreed upon in 2022.

## COLLABORATION WITH THINK TANKS AND NGOS

Based on Council Decision (CFSP) 2010/430 of 26 July 2010, the implementation of the EU Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction has been actively supported by the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium, which started its activities in January 2011. The third phase of the EUNPDC project was implemented from 18 May 2018 to 17 May 2022 under the EU Council Decision (CSFP) 2018/299. On 11 April 2022, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2022/597, which further extends the EU support for the activities of the Consortium for the period 2022-2025 by building on the achievements to date and by adding new projects.

The Consortium's activities contributed substantially to EU policy shaping in the areas of non-proliferation and disarmament and increased EU visibility vis-à-vis third countries and civil society. The Consortium provides a platform for informal contacts among practitioners and stimulates dialogue between different stakeholders. Its activities have helped raise awareness of the challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms, and explored solutions to address these challenges. It draws on an extensive network of 109 think tanks and research centres across Europe, including members from all EU Member States, as well as Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Türkiye, Ukraine and United Kingdom. Three institutes joined the network during 2022.

In its work towards the achievement of the objectives of the Council Decision, the Consortium puts a special focus on mainstreaming a gender perspective and promoting the next generation of researchers and practitioners in non-proliferation and disarmament fields, as well as on connecting the gaps between the natural sciences and social sciences, between policymakers and academia, and between academia and policy research institutes. As part of its commitment to these priorities, the Consortium organizes non-proliferation awareness training courses for graduate and post-graduate students of natural and engineering sciences and implements the 'Next Generation and Young Women activities and Mentorship Programme', which also includes the organization of outreach visits to universities in Europe and webinars on thematic topics. All events convened by the Consortium ensured diversity of participants and speakers in terms of gender, age, expertise and geographical representation.

Due to the circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, some events took place either in the virtual space or in a hybrid format. During 2022 the Consortium organised the following activities to implement different aspects of Council Decision (CSFP) 2018/299 and of Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/597:

- An introductory course on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction for graduate and post-graduate students in the fields of IT and engineering ‘The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: History, Threats and Solutions’ (23-25 February)
- Seminars on ‘Emerging technologies’ (24 February); ‘Strengthening the gender focus in disarmament and non-proliferation’ (30 March); ‘Non-Nuclear Weapons and Strategic Stability in Europe: Theory and Practice’ (29 April); ‘Security, Nuclear Weapons and the Impact of the War in Ukraine’ (5 May); and ‘War in Ukraine: The Impact on the International Security Architecture, Non-proliferation, Disarmament, Arms Control, Export Controls’ (16-17 May)
- The 11th EU Consultative Meeting, gathering EU officials and European experts (14-15 September)
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> UN Disarmament Fellows visit in Brussels (14-16 September)
- The 6<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the European Network of Independent Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Think Tanks (8 November)
- The 11<sup>th</sup> EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference (14-15 November)
- A Next Generation Workshop (14 November)
- An introductory course on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction for graduate and post-graduate students of engineering disciplines ‘WMD Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Pathways’ (6-8 December)

The following Young Women and Next Generation Initiative related activities were conducted during 2022:

- The launch of a second edition of the Young Women Mentorship programme on 15 September (which ran until 15 May 2023)
- A targeted skill-building workshop for Young Women within the Outreach Activities to Next Generation (17 February)



- An outreach event of the Young Women and Next Generation Initiative (YWNGI) on ‘Working at International Organisations: Tips and Insights for the Next Generation—the BWC and the OPCW’ (31 March)
- An outreach university visit ‘Non-Proliferation and Disarmament: Current Challenges and the Way Ahead’ at the University of Turin (5 May)
- An outreach university visit with the goal of promoting the work of the EUNPDC at the University of Roma Tre (10 October)
- An event on ‘Engagement Opportunities in Arms Control, Disarmament & Non-Proliferation for Young Professionals & Students’ (19 October)
- A skill-building workshop on ‘Nuclear Op-Ed Writing’ (18 November)

The Consortium published a monthly newsletter as well as four EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament papers during 2022.<sup>12</sup> Training activities included e-Learning courses on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and EU policies as well as supporting seven Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Internships in members of the Network.

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<sup>12</sup> Available at <https://www.nonproliferation.eu/activities/online-publishing/non-proliferation-papers/>.

## DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES

In accordance with its WMD non-proliferation policy, and in line with the 2003 Council Conclusions, the EU continued to work on the mainstreaming of WMD non-proliferation commitments in agreements with partner countries. In 2022, the EU signed Partnership and Cooperation Agreements with Thailand<sup>13</sup> and Malaysia<sup>14</sup> containing dedicated clauses on weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms.

Throughout the year, the EEAS continued to engage in non-proliferation and disarmament dialogues with a range of partners. Non-proliferation and disarmament dialogues were held with India and China in February 2022 and with Cuba on 22 November (preceded by a seminar with representatives of Cuban and European civil society on 21 November)<sup>15</sup>. A high level non-proliferation and disarmament dialogue was held with the US in December 2022. In addition, informal consultations continued to be conducted with a range of third countries and international organisation throughout the year. Non-proliferation and disarmament issues furthermore continued to be integrated in the EU's various political dialogues with other partners.

Within the G7, several statements relating to non-proliferation and disarmament were issued during 2022, including by the G7 Non-Proliferation Directors Group on 9 May,<sup>16</sup> the G7 Foreign Ministers on 14 May<sup>17</sup> and 4 November,<sup>18</sup> and the G7 leaders' communique of 28 June.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> [Indo-Pacific: The European Union and Thailand sign Partnership and Cooperation Agreement - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> [Indo-Pacific: The European Union and Malaysia sign Partnership and Cooperation Agreement - Consilium \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>15</sup> [Cuba: Political dialogue on disarmament and non-proliferation held with EU | EEAS \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> [Statement of the G7 Non-Proliferation Directors Group \(09 May 2022\) - Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs \(diplomatie.gouv.fr\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> [2022-05-14-g7-foreign-ministers-communique-data.pdf \(g7germany.de\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> [G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement - Federal Foreign Office \(auswaertiges-amt.de\)](#)

<sup>19</sup> [2022-07-14-leaders-communique-data.pdf \(g7germany.de\)](#)