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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 (2020).

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION STRATEGY AGAINST THE PROLIFERATION OF WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION (2020)

INTRODUCTION

1. This Progress Report on the implementation of the European Union Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD), adopted by the European Council in December 2003 (doc. 15708/03), covers activities carried out in 2020. The Report is non-exhaustive and focuses on the main developments. All activities were undertaken within the broader context of EU security policy and the EU Security Union Strategy for the period 2020 to 2025.
2. 2020 was an unprecedented year, with the COVID-19 pandemic seriously impacting multilateral work, mostly because of travel restrictions. While a number of multilateral meetings, most notably the 10th Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), were postponed, many other meetings could be organised online. In that way, multilateral discussions could continue, while recognising the limitations of interactions via videoconference. As most of the EU's work on WMD is carried out in multilateral fora, this created new challenges.
3. Based on the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy (doc. 10715/16), the European Union Strategy against the proliferation of WMD and the New Lines for Action (doc. 17172/08), the guiding principles of the European Union continue to be:

- a. effective multilateralism, including 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;
 - b. close cooperation with countries to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime;
 - c. addressing non-proliferation issues in the EU's bilateral political and non-proliferation and disarmament dialogue meetings, and in more informal contacts;
 - d. the effective and complementary use of all available instruments and financial resources – the Common Foreign and Security Policy budget, the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), and other instruments – in order to underpin EU foreign policy objectives.
4. The European External Action Service (EEAS), in particular the Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (a new Special Envoy assumed her position on 1 September 2020) represented the EU in a number of key international meetings in 2020:
- The G7 Non-Proliferation Directors’ Group meeting (2 - 4 March, 16 September and 4 December)
 - The conference: “Capturing Technology. Rethinking Arms Control” (6 November)
 - The NATO WMD Conference (10 November)
 - Numerous events organised by think tanks on the preparations for the NPT Review Conference as well as at outreach events organised under Council Decisions, such as on NPT Review Conference support, The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC), and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

The Special Envoy focussed on:

- a. promoting the preservation and strengthening of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a fundamental multilateral instrument for reinforcing international peace, security and stability;
 - b. promoting universal adherence to and entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and enhancing the visibility of the EU's commitment to this;
 - c. upholding the global norm against chemical weapons, including by preventing impunity for their use;
 - d. promoting the Hague Code of Conduct (HCoC) against Ballistic Missile Proliferation as a confidence and transparency-building measure;
5. The EU Council Working Group on Non-Proliferation (CONOP) convened nine times in 2020, including once at director level, seven of which took place via informal videoconferences due to the pandemic, to discuss EU positions and future activities. The EU Delegations in Vienna, Geneva and New York prepared and coordinated dozens of EU statements for multilateral fora and contributed actively to policy-making through regular EU coordination meetings and participation in the Working Party meetings.

NUCLEAR ISSUES

6. The EU remains fully committed to promoting 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 universalisation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and the start and early conclusion of negotiations, at the Conference on Disarmament, on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT). The establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East also continues to be an EU priority. EU contributions to UNIDIR under Council Decision 2019/938 in support of confidence-building measures leading to the establishment of such a zone continued in 2020.

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the International Atomic Energy Agency

7. The NPT review cycle was to be completed in April/May 2020 at the Tenth NPT Review Conference. Due to global health conditions and ensuing travel restrictions, States Parties agreed in March 2020 to postpone the Review Conference to January 2021. Later in the year, the Review Conference was postponed once again, provisionally, to August 2021. The EU contributed to all relevant debates organised in virtual as well as in-person format, including to the general debate at the 75th session of the UN General Assembly's First Committee on Disarmament and International Security.

8. The implementation of the CFSP Council decision 2019/615 continued in 2020 with two activities being carried out by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA): the thematic seminar on Pillar I (nuclear disarmament), held in Geneva (29-30 January) and the thematic seminar on Pillar II (nuclear non-proliferation), held in New York (2-3 March). The overriding objective of the Council Decision is to help facilitate a successful outcome of the NPT Review Conference and the development of a realistic and a feasible set of actions and recommendations that can enjoy consensus. The two remaining regional meetings, aimed at covering all three of the NPT pillars viewed through the lens of regional priorities and concerns, could not be organised. CFSP Council Decision 2019/615 on Union support for activities leading up to the Review Conference was extended in June 2020 on a no-cost basis until 16 April 2021, through Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/906.

9. The EU continued to support the core responsibilities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) concerning non-proliferation, nuclear safety, nuclear security, nuclear energy applications and technical cooperation, including through relevant financial support. The EU and EURATOM participated actively in all meetings of the IAEA governing bodies, with EU coordination taking place in Vienna. Two EU-sponsored resolutions on nuclear safeguards and nuclear security were adopted by consensus at the 64th IAEA General Conference in September 2020.

10. With the latest Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1656 of 6 November 2020, worth EUR 11.6 million, the EU continues to contribute to the implementation of the IAEA's nuclear security activities. EU funding supports IAEA activities towards:
 - the universalisation of international non-proliferation and nuclear security instruments, including the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material;

- information management with a focus on assessing nuclear security needs, priorities and threats; nuclear security of materials and associated facilities with a focus on enhancing physical protection and nuclear material accounting and control for the whole fuel cycle, and a concept paper on the application of physical protection measures in the age of COVID-19;
- nuclear security of materials out of regulatory control with a focus on institutional response infrastructure; and
- programme development and international cooperation with a focus on education and training programme development as well as gender-focussed capacity building and education in nuclear security.

11. The IAEA also continued to successfully implement Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2001 of 15 November 2016 on the EU contribution to the establishment and secure management of a Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) Bank under the control of the IAEA in the framework of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

12. The JRC and the IAEA continued to implement 'Practical Arrangements on Cooperation on Nuclear Science Applications' signed on the margins of the 5th EU-IAEA Senior Officials Meeting (15 February 2017), aimed at developing joint activities and avoiding duplication of efforts. One of the activities included in these practical arrangements is the environmental monitoring of radioactivity, measured across Europe and a number of other global locations in the form of gamma dose rate averages and maxima for the last 24 hours. These measurements originate from some 5,500 monitoring sites, operated by competent national authorities in 39 countries, which report latest radiological values to the European Radiological Data Exchange Platform (EURDEP). Notification of a radiological accident or emergency is done through early notification networks such as ECURIE or EMERCON, operated by the European Commission and the IAEA respectively, after consultation with the competent national authorities.

13. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture and an achievement of multilateral diplomacy. The full implementation of the agreement is essential for European security. The EU has repeatedly regretted Iran's reduction of its nuclear commitments under the JCPOA that started in July 2019 and continued throughout 2020. The EU High Representative, as Coordinator of the JCPOA Joint Commission, remains fully committed to working with the international community to preserve the JCPOA and ensure full JCPOA implementation. We have welcomed the prospect of a US return to the JCPOA and Iran's return to full JCPOA implementation, and support the ongoing, intense diplomatic efforts, and contact of the EU High Representative with all relevant partners.

14. At the same time, the EU also continues to contribute to the implementation of the JCPOA by coordinating the Joint Commission and expert-level working groups, established under the JCPOA. The EU also continues to support the IAEA's long-term mission to verify and monitor Iran's nuclear-related commitments. Despite COVID-related restrictions, the EU continues cooperating with Iran in the civil nuclear field under Annex III of the JCPOA in the field of nuclear safety. The JCPOA Procurement Channel, which reviews transfers of nuclear or dual-use items to Iran, remains fully operational. In 2020, the Procurement Working Group met seven times and the negative trend of proposals observed in 2019, was reversed. Iran remains the EU's top beneficiary in the field of nuclear safety. EU - IR civil nuclear cooperation includes support for the modernisation of the Arak research reactor (Khondab), the Iranian nuclear safety regulator (INRA), the IAEA's verification and monitoring in Iran, stress tests for the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant, and the supply of equipment for Iran's INRA Nuclear Safety Centre.

15. Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, together with Additional Protocols, constitute the current verification standard, and the EU continues to call for universal adherence to them. The close cooperation between EURATOM and the IAEA allows for effective and efficient safeguards. The EU actively supports the IAEA safeguards system through the European Commission Safeguards Support Programme (EC-SP), the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation and through Member States' Support Programmes. The EC-SP previously strengthened IAEA nuclear safeguards capabilities, including capabilities for verification of the implementation of the JCPOA by the provision of training to IAEA safeguards inspectors on Complementary Access and on operation of COMPUCEA (Combined Procedure for Uranium Concentration and Enrichment Assay) for verification of UF₆ enrichment, including the respective reference materials. The EC-SP supports the IAEA Network of Analytical Laboratories in their JCPOA verification mandates with analytical services, standardised methods and quality control tools. Particularly particle analysis and the production and certification of reference particles support the IAEA Network of Analytical Laboratories in developing new methods and measurement protocols for environmental swipe sample analysis under the Additional Protocol.

16. The European Commission continues to operate and actively support the European Safeguards Research and Development Association (ESARDA), which also continues its international outreach through its Memorandums of Understanding with the African Commission on Nuclear Energy and the Asian Pacific Safeguards Network in close collaboration with the Institute for Nuclear Materials Management. ESARDA Working Groups develop, test and validate innovative safeguards and non-proliferation approaches, of direct benefit to the Nuclear Safeguards Directorate of DG ENER and the Safeguards Department of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Despite COVID-related restrictions, remote technical trainings on uranium enrichment, plutonium isotopic composition verifications, and Laser Mapping for Containment Verification (LMCV) for EURATOM inspectors took place. Prior to the pandemic, training on neutron counting also took place. The well-established ESARDA course on nuclear safeguards and non-proliferation was, however, cancelled in 2020 and extensive scenarios were prepared for the 2021 edition of the course (12-16 April 2021). Research and development results and education and training initiatives enhance European and international capabilities in nuclear safeguards and strategic trade control. Spin-off from this work was used to contribute to nuclear security and nuclear disarmament initiatives. The EC JRC gained experience on remote technical training for safeguards inspectors that was shared with the IAEA through trilateral meetings (IAEA, EURATOM and JRC). The traditional ESARDA May meeting in Luxembourg was postponed until November 2020 and co-organised by IRSN in a virtual format with 270 participants. ESARDA is now preparing the first ever Joint Annual Meeting with the Institute for Nuclear Materials Management, scheduled as a virtual event for the end of August 2021.

17. The European Commission has funded a large training and education project in the area of nuclear safeguards with the European Nuclear Education Network (ENEN). Under this contract, ENEN works together with the Politecnico di Milano (POLIMI), JRC, ESARDA and the IAEA to set up the first ever academic postgraduate programme on nuclear safeguards for the academic year 2021/2022. A specific recruitment campaign for students outside Europe is ongoing and up to 35 expert lecturers to teach the course have been identified.

18. The Council, on the proposal of the European External Action Service (EEAS) has decided in 2020 to contribute to the universalisation of elements of the IAEA safeguards system, with a special focus on the Amended Small Quantities Protocol (SQP) and the Additional Protocol (AP), by a series of demarches to be carried out in third states.¹ Delivery of those demarches started in December 2020.
19. The EU and its Member States attach the utmost importance to the worldwide implementation and continuous improvement of nuclear safety. The EU has given legal force to the objectives of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety through its amended Nuclear Safety Directive that entered into force in 2017. A key element of the amended directive is the introduction of a safety objective for all operators to prevent accidents and avoid significant radioactive releases. The amended directive also added Topical Peer Reviews in EURATOM law. A first European Topical Peer Review was conducted successfully. All EU Member States have transposed the new requirements into their national laws.
20. To further the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the EU has allocated EUR 325 million over the period 2014-2020 to promote nuclear safety, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards in third countries. The European Commission, working with the IAEA and other partners, is supporting the implementation of the strategic master plan for environmental remediation in Central Asia, to be financed by the dedicated Environmental Remediation Account (ERA), managed by the EBRD. As the largest donor, the EU continues to reach out to the beneficiary countries (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) to foster engagement and start concrete clean-up and remediation projects.

¹ Barbados, Belize, Bhutan, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Cabo Verde, Dominica, Fiji, Grenada, Guyana, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Sudan, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Yemen, Zambia

21. 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. The EU and its Member States rank among the biggest contributors to the Technical Cooperation Programme, which is an important tool to enable the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technology and to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

22. The EU and the IAEA usually hold an annual Senior Officials Meetings to review and plan their broad-range cooperation. While the 2020 annual meeting could not be held due to the pandemic, close contact was maintained through other channels between the EU and IAEA.

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

23. The entry into force and universalisation of the CTBT are important 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 by applying its basic obligations. The CTBT is a strong confidence and security building measure. In 2020, the EU engaged in diplomatic activities in support of CTBT, adapted to the limited opportunities due to the pandemic. Promoting the entry into force of the CTBT was one of the actions on the UN Secretary General's Security our Common Future: an Agenda for Disarmament that the EU decided to support. The EU has repeatedly called for 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. Besides those, on 6 October 2020, the Special Envoy for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament took part as a panellist at the webinar "The CTBT and the 10th NPT Review Conference", organised by the CTBTO.

24. The EU consistently promotes the benefits and contributions of the Treaty to peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation, including in its civil applications. EU financial support for the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT Organisation (CTBTO) was renewed for another three-year period in 2020 with 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 and its Member States also contributed to the maintenance and strengthening of the CTBT verification regime 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, its Working Groups A and B, with EU coordination taking place in CONOP and in Vienna.

Initiatives related to nuclear security

25. The EU supported the convening and 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.

26. The EU continued to promote the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) and the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (ACPPNM) as fundamental elements of the global nuclear security and anti-terrorism architecture. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) continued implementing Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1939 on Union support for the universalisation and effective implementation of ICSANT. 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. A number of events foreseen for 2020 were postponed or, alternatively, successfully held in virtual format, given the pandemic.
27. 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.
28. 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.

29. 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 operated by the EC Joint Research Centre (JRC) at its sites in Karlsruhe (Germany) and Ispra (Italy), in close cooperation with other international initiatives promoted by the IAEA and several GICNT partner countries. The Centre is also used for practical exercises, mainly related to countering nuclear smuggling. EUSECTRA is active in addressing the training needs of the EU Member States and EU partners, including through coordinated trainings for Member States' delegates in customs and law enforcement, already implemented and planned for 2019-2021 (in direct collaboration with EC DG HOME and EC DG TAXUD). EUSECTRA reinforces the infrastructure used to conduct the training, develops virtual learning tools and provides an assessment of equipment performance upon request by EU Member States. The pandemic has restrained physical trainings. A hybrid approach has been developed using modern means, focussing on field exercises with the remote use of instruments and the real-life use of nuclear and radioactive materials to sustain the efforts against CBRN-related threats and nuclear terrorism.
30. The European Commission and the EU Member States continued their nuclear forensics activities on the characterisation of intercepted nuclear material, using state-of-the-art nuclear forensic capabilities at the JRC site in Karlsruhe, Germany.
31. JRC and ESARDA provided substantial input to the book on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Verification - Innovative Systems Concepts, released in 2020.

32. The European Commission continued building the capacity of EU Member States to test and evaluate the performance of equipment used to detect the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials through its ITRAP+10 Phase II programme, which shall lead to further harmonisation and standardisation, and contribute substantially to international standards. To this effect, the Commission also organised a well-attended side event at the International Conference on Nuclear Security (ICONS) 2020.
33. The European Commission continues to play a major role within the Border Monitoring Working Group for nuclear security. It chaired both the BMWG and its two sub groups on Detection Technologies and Capacity Building.
34. The European Commission continued its research on the development of a new Non-Destructive Assay technique, namely the delayed gamma spectrometry for the verification of nuclear material signatures in collaboration with the IAEA. A Joint Action (JRC and IAEA) under the Support Programme to the IAEA was submitted.

35. In 2020 TAXUD, supported by JRC and EUSECTRA, launched an interactive eLearning Programme to support customs officers in learning about radioactive and nuclear border control. The basic module demonstrates customs officers' important role in detecting nuclear and radioactive materials, making them aware of risks and threats, along with a basic introduction to relevant materials, equipment and processes. The advanced module explores the same topics in more detail. Both courses include realistic scenarios, involving seaports, airports, railways, and land borders, in which course participants can test their decision-making. Collaboration between DG TAXUD and the JRC has built greater synergies between Member States' customs administrations. The trainings provided at the EUSECTRA centre will serve as platform for national experts to exchange best nuclear security practices in border protection, thus contributing to the development of harmonised procedures. This is part of a drive to combat nuclear trafficking collaboratively and to facilitate trade through customs checkpoints. Ultimately, the goal is to prevent individuals from gaining access to harmful materials by promoting a common nuclear security culture.

Initiatives related to nuclear verification

36. The EU and its Member States supported the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on nuclear disarmament verification at the UN General Assembly in 2016, welcomed the discussions in the GGE and agreed with the recommendation to pursue further work, taking into account the GGE's report. The EU fully supports UN General Assembly resolution 74/50 and the establishment of a new Group of Governmental Experts, convening in 2021 and 2022 to continue to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. The EU is supportive of the work of broader partnerships and cooperative verification arrangements and has participated in the work of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) since its inauguration in 2015. The EU is also a supporter of the action point related to nuclear disarmament verification in the UN Secretary General's Security our Common Future: an Agenda for Disarmament.

Regional issues

37. The EU and its Member States continued urging the DPRK to take concrete steps towards abandoning its WMD and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. This was reflected in all relevant EU statements. The EU saw the ballistic missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), which occurred in March and April 2020, as violations of obligations under multiple UN Security Council Resolutions, representing a grave threat to regional and international peace and security and undermining international efforts aimed at building lasting peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. The display of apparently new missiles in October and assertions by the DPRK that it no longer sees itself as obliged to maintain a moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons and Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles further undermined the environment to resume dialogue. The EU called on the DPRK to immediately halt all its launches, engage in meaningful negotiations, take concrete and credible steps towards building trust and confidence and abandon all its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. The EU continued to urge the DPRK to fully comply with all relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and its other international obligations and commitments, to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay, and to return to compliance with its safeguards obligations under the NPT. The EU has swiftly transposed all Security Council Resolutions into EU legislation, and has also adopted rigorous autonomous sanctions, which complement and reinforce the sanctions adopted by the UN. The EU continued efforts to encourage other countries to fully implement sanctions against the DPRK. An EEAS Spokesperson's statement issued on 16 June expressed regret at DPRK actions that had raised tension and urged the restart of a sustained diplomatic process aimed at building trust and establishing lasting peace and security on the Korean Peninsula, free of nuclear weapons at the earliest possible time.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD)/ Treaty Banning the Production of Fissile Material for Nuclear Weapons or other Nuclear Explosive Devices

38. The EU remains united and committed to verifiable treaty-based nuclear disarmament and arms control and stresses the need to renew multilateral efforts and revitalise multilateral negotiating bodies, in particular the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The EU's longstanding priority in the Conference on Disarmament is to immediately commence negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT). The EU supports commencing such negotiations in accordance with document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. The EU calls on all CD members to start negotiations on a FMCT without delay and to begin work on the other issues on the agenda. With Council Decision 2017/2284 of 11 December 2017, the EU provided financial support to the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to facilitate the participation of African, Asian, Latin American and Caribbean countries in FMCT related consultations and other activities. The EU also encourages all countries possessing nuclear weapons that have not done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, if they have not already done so. The EU Member State, which is a nuclear weapon state, has declared relevant moratoria and dismantled such facilities.

CHEMICAL WEAPONS

39. The EU continued to support the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) politically, diplomatically and financially to ensure the full and effective implementation of and universal adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

40. In this context, the implementation of Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/538 of 1 April 2019 continued. This Decision provides EU support to OPCW core activities (such as national implementation, international cooperation, universalisation, the Africa Programme) over the period 2019-2022. The Decision also provides a substantial contribution to the upgrading of the OPCW Laboratory into a Centre for Chemistry and Technology as well as to the implementation of the Decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 "Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons", taken by the Special Session of the Conference of States Parties (CSP) to the CWC on 27 June 2018.
41. The EU firmly supported the work of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission (FFM), the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) as well the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) in investigating reports of chemical weapons use in Syria, in seeking to resolve the identified gaps and inconsistencies in the Syrian initial declaration, as well as in investigating and identifying the perpetrators of chemical attacks in Syria. In this context, the implementation of Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/2303 as amended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2112 in support of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2118 (2013) and OPCW Executive Council Decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 on the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons through the provision of satellite imagery in support of the OPCW operations in Syria continued.
42. In line with the European Council Conclusions of 28 June 2018, which committed the EU to supporting the implementation of the Decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 of the Special Session of the CSP to the Chemical Weapons Convention on 27 June 2018 to establish an attribution mechanism in response to repeated use of these weapons since 2012 and with a view to ensuring the adoption of the draft OPCW Programme and Budget for 2021, the EU carried out a demarche to a large number of CWC States Parties asking for their participation in and support for a successful outcome of the first part of the 25th Conference of States Parties (CSP-25) held on 30 November – 1 December 2020.

43. In 2020, implementation of Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/1252 of 11 July 2017 in support of the strengthening of chemical safety and security in Ukraine in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery continued. Through this Decision, the EU has supported national capacity building in Ukraine and notably the establishment of Ukrainian National Reference Centre to identify controlled and toxic chemicals.

BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS

44. The EU and its Member States are strong supporters of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and very much engaged in international efforts to improve bio-safety and bio-security around the globe. Through Joint Actions and Council Decisions, the EU has provided nearly EUR 10 million in support of the BTWC directly since 2006. Additionally, the EU has provided a further EUR 6 million in support of strengthening bio-safety and security in Ukraine and in a number of countries in Latin America, as well as in support of the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons.

45. In July 2020, the EU carried out an universalisation outreach campaign towards 13 countries that are not yet States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, encouraging them to accede to the Convention before the Ninth Review Conference.

46. In 2020, the implementation of Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention continued, but was significantly hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Decision provides for a budget of EUR 3 million to the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) for the period 2019-22. This allows the BTWC Implementation Support Unit (ISU) to facilitate six new projects in support of universalisation; capacity building for national implementation including three peer review exercises; fostering biosecurity in the Global South; developing tools for outreach, education and engagement; as well as increasing preparedness to respond to biological attacks. On 14 October 2020, the National Preparedness Programme for Nigeria as well as an Online Training on Preparation and Submission of Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) were launched through a virtual meeting.

47. In 2020, the start of the implementation of Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2019/1296 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery of 31 July 2019 was delayed. This Decision is implemented by the OSCE and it provides for EUR 1.9 million support over three years. Through this Decision, the EU is supporting strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine notably by improving Ukraine's legislative and regulatory basis and its human and animal health systems, as well as by raising the awareness of life scientists.

48. In 2020, the implementation of Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2019/2108 of 9 December 2019 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Latin America in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery continued, but was significantly hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Decision is implemented by the Organisation of American States and it provides for EUR 2.7 million worth of support over three years.
49. On 2 June 2020, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2020/732 in support of the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological or toxin weapons, which is implemented by UNODA and provides for EUR 1.4 million over three years.
50. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all BTWC meetings of 2020 were postponed until 2021 while the Ninth Review Conference was postponed until 2022. Meanwhile, in October-November 2020, the BTWC Implementation Support Unit organised a series of informal Webinars on the topics of the five Meetings of Experts.
51. In October 2020, the EU carried out an outreach campaign in New York and in Geneva encouraging UN Member States not to support at the 75th UNGA session a draft Resolution on UN Secretary General's Mechanism that was not in line with the conception of the UNSGM as an independent international instrument for the investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological weapons that the EU strongly supports.

52. On 12 October 2020, the EU extended by Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1466 its regime of restrictive measures to address the use and proliferation of chemical weapons for a further 12 months. On 14 October 2020, the Council adopted Decision (CFSP) 2020/1482 whereby six persons and one entity were added to the list of natural and legal persons, entities and bodies subject to restrictive measures.

BALLISTIC MISSILES

Hague Code of Conduct

53. The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) is the result of efforts by the international community to regulate the area of ballistic missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction. The HCoC is the only multilateral transparency and confidence building instrument relating to the spread of ballistic missiles. By subscribing to the HCoC, members voluntarily commit themselves to provide pre-launch notifications on ballistic missile and space-launch vehicle launches and test flights. Subscribing countries also commit themselves to submitting an annual declaration of their country's policies on ballistic missiles and space-launch vehicles.

54. The EU has strongly supported the Code since its inception. All EU Member States have subscribed to it. Since the signing and entry into force of the politically binding HCoC in November 2002 in The Hague, Netherlands, the number of signatories has increased from 93 to 143. This is also due to the EU's diplomatic outreach to a number of non-subscribing States in support of the universalisation of the Code.

55. The EU consistently promotes the universality, full implementation and enhanced functioning of the Code. Over the last decade, the EU Council has adopted, in the CFSP framework, a series of Decisions/Joint Actions supporting the Hague Code of Conduct and missile non-proliferation in general. Through these Council Decisions, the EU finances HCoC outreach activities, including 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 rotating HCoC Chair.

56. With Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/2370 of 18 December 2017, the EU continues to: promote the subscription to the Code and ultimately its universality; support the full implementation of the Code; promote dialogue among subscribing and non-subscribing States to build confidence and transparency; encourage restraint and create more stability and security for all; reinforce the Code's visibility and raise public awareness about the risks and threats posed by ballistic missile proliferation; and explore, in particular through academic studies, possibilities of enhancing the Code and of promoting cooperation between the Code and other relevant multilateral instruments.

57. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a temporary suspension of physical activities had to be applied. Still, a number of outreach events did take place in virtual format, namely:

- i) with UNIDIR, on Rockets, Missiles, and Space: Lessons from the Hague Code of Conduct and beyond, on 3 June 2020;
- ii) a side event to the UNGA First Committee on 29 October 2020;
- iii) an Expert Mission to Vietnam on 10 December 2020; and
- iv) a Regional Seminar with China, Nepal, and South Korea.

Moreover, a number of papers and short papers (issue briefs) have been published.

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1540 AND CBRN RISK MITIGATION

58. The UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) continues to be a central pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture. It is the first international instrument to deal in an integrated and comprehensive manner with weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and related materials. UNSCR 1540 (2004) establishes binding obligations on all countries. These aim to prevent and deter non-state actors from obtaining access to such weapons, their means of delivery and -related materials. Adopted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter, the Resolution requires all countries to adopt the necessary legislation barring non-state actors from getting nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, and to establish appropriate domestic controls for related materials to prevent their illicit trafficking. The 2016 comprehensive review process of UNSCR 1540 reaffirmed its centrality, importance and authority as reflected in UNSCR 2325.

59. In order to help implement the outcome of the 2016 comprehensive review and to support the full implementation of UNSCR 1540, on 11 May 2017 the Council adopted Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/809, in support of the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The Council Decision covers a period of 48 months and is being implemented by the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in New York, which has sub-contracted some of the implementation to the OSCE in Vienna. The EU funding supports assisting countries in identifying specific technical assistance, raising awareness of relevant technical assistance programmes, as well as of enhancing cooperation with international and regional organisations, in support of national capacity building efforts.

60. The European Commission Joint Research Centre (JRC) officially transmitted to the Chair of the 1540 Committee a copy of the Strategic Trade Atlas, jointly prepared by the JRC and the US Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory. The Strategic Trade Atlas was developed to promote understanding of global trade flows in strategic goods, i.e. goods of militarily strategic value, including dual-use goods. The Atlas is published in two volumes, providing country²- and commodity³-based views of strategic trade. The Strategic Trade Atlas is used – inter alia - by the World Customs Organisation. As such, it was deemed of interest to the 1540 Committee Group of Experts.

61. The EU CBRN Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative (EU CBRN CoE) was established in 2010 as a worldwide capacity building programme for the mitigation of risks, whether of an intentional, accidental or natural origin, related to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials or agents and risks to related installations or sites. The Initiative is currently gathering 62 partner countries, grouped around eight Regional Secretariats, located in the following regions: African Atlantic Façade, Central Asia, Eastern and Central Africa, Gulf Cooperation Council Countries, Middle East, North Africa and Sahel, South East Asia, and South East and Eastern Europe.

² Versino, C., Heine, P. and Carrera, J., Strategic Trade Atlas. Country-Based Views, EUR 29194 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2018, ISBN 978-92-79-84030-2, doi:10.2760/440433, JRC111470.

³ Versino, C., Heine, P. and Carrera, J., Strategic Trade Atlas. Commodity-Based Views, EUR 29195 EN, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2018, ISBN 978-92-79-84031-9, doi:10.2760/277525, JRC111471.

62. The EU CBRN CoE has been financed under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace (IcSP), which expired in 2020 and is to be replaced by the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) 2021-2027. The EU CBRN CoE has made progress in mitigating risks related to CBRN materials, by improving capacities and cooperation at national and regional level and by promoting a culture of safety and cooperation, according to a European Court of Auditors report of 2018 (SR14/2018, ECA). Participating countries are supported in their efforts to establish, on a voluntary basis and following a demand-driven, regional approach, national and regional coordination and governance structures. These platforms develop and reinforce national CBRN policies and build capacities based on specific needs, risk assessments and national action plans. They are supported through several regional cooperation projects funded under the Initiative and open to other financing instruments. Since 2010, 85 regional projects have been funded. The budget for the initiative for the 10 –year period starting in 2010 amounts to approximately EUR 250 million.

63. The Centres of Excellence network is now well-developed. During the COVID-19 pandemic it proved its robustness and sustainability when several Regional Secretariats initiated a series of webinars to exchange expertise, and share experiences and best practices for epidemic management. Ad-hoc support to several countries helped them put in place appropriate procedures to detect the first cases of infection. Long-term assistance with a particular focus on Africa will continue to increase capacities for early detection and surveillance of highly dangerous pathogens with a One Health approach. Regional CBRN Action Plans as well as inter-regional cooperation are under development in several regions. Moreover, the Initiative is mature enough to support further actions addressing security governance issues related to cybercrime, terrorism, critical infrastructures, falsified medicines, hybrid threats and explosives, as well as to further develop cooperation on nuclear forensics, border control and export control of dual-use items. In 2020, in the framework of the EU CBRN Centres of Excellence network, the EU JRC, in collaboration with the US Department of Energy and the Kyiv Institute for Nuclear Research, developed nuclear security education and training activities for participants from Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova, to enhance nuclear security in the Black Sea region, and supported the implementation of three nuclear security related projects in GUAM countries (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova). Desktop and field exercises based on nuclear smuggling scenarios were conducted in Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. Training of young nuclear security professionals was offered at the Kyiv Institute for Nuclear Research and the Kharkov Institute for Physics and Technology. Additionally, a regional nuclear forensics information system was established. For sustaining nuclear forensics capabilities in the Black Sea region, three follow-up projects for GUAM countries, to start in 2021 and managed by the STCU (Science and Technology Centre in Ukraine), were initiated. Moreover, a project on nuclear forensics capacity building, managed by the ISTC (International Science and Technology Centre), in Georgia and Armenia was drafted; this project will also start in 2021.

64. On the internal aspects of mitigating CBRN threats, the implementation of the Action Plan to enhance preparedness against chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear security risks, presented in October 2017 by the Commission as a part of wider Counterterrorism Package, was reviewed towards the end of 2019 and the document is still considered the valid policy framework in the CBRN area. The 2020 Counter-Terrorism Agenda reinforced some aspects of CBRN, namely in relation to the threat from chemical agents and in relation to biosecurity. Regarding the former, the Commission is currently looking at the feasibility of restricting access to some of the chemicals that can be used for malicious purposes. Work on CBRN detection – including the Commission-coordinated equipment trials undertaken by some of the Member States - progressed as planned. However, some of the CBRN activities started in 2019 had to be put on hold in 2020; most notably the training campaign for EU law enforcement on radiological threats, which was being implemented in the EUSECTRA training centre in Karlsruhe, Germany.

65. The implementation of the Action Plan is supported by projects co-financed by the Internal Security Police Fund. Among the selected initiatives, two were particularly relevant for CBRN policy. One of them (Mall-CBRN) looks at CBRN protection and preparedness in large shopping malls, whilst another (Safe Stadium) applies a similar approach to large sport arenas, in particular football stadiums. One of the benefits of both initiatives is the presence of relevant end users in the consortia, e.g. the football club Real Madrid.

66. The EU CBRN Action Plan has received scientific and technical support from a range of research projects funded by the Secure Society Programme under the 7th Framework Programme. The research covers the entire crisis management cycle from prevention to recovery. Activities to identify standardisation needs could lead to ‘European Norms’ standards. The Horizon 2020 programme will strengthen on-going work in CBRN research through focused topics.

THINK TANKS

67. Based on Council Decision 2010/430/CFSP 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. On 26 February 2018, the Council adopted Decision 2018/299/CFSP, which further extends the EU support for the activities of the Consortium for the period 2018-2021 by building on the achievements to date and by adding new projects.

68. The Consortium's activities increased EU visibility vis-à-vis third countries and civil society and contributed substantially to EU policy shaping in the areas of non-proliferation and disarmament. 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 99 think tanks and research centres across Europe, including members from all EU Member States as well as from partner countries such as Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine. 9 institutes joined the Network during 2020.

69. 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, in 2020 these events took place in the virtual space. More specifically, during 2020 the Consortium organised the following activities to implement Council Decision 2018/299/CFSP:

- A course on nuclear non-proliferation for graduate and post-graduate students in the fields of IT and engineering, titled ‘The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: History, Threats and Solutions’ (19-21 February 2020);
- An ad hoc seminar on ‘Strengthening Non-proliferation and Disarmament Education in Europe’ (Part I) (23-24 June 2020);
- The 9th EU Consultative Meeting, gathering EU officials and European experts (10-11 September 2020);
- The 4th annual meeting of the European Network of Independent Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Think Tanks (9 November 2020);
- The 9th EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference (12-13 November 2020);
- A Next Generation Workshop (25 November 2020);
- An ad-hoc seminar on ‘Addressing illicit SALW and ammunition in conflict affected areas: The role for peace support operations’ (14-15 December 2020).

70. The Consortium published a monthly newsletter as well as six EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament papers during 2020⁴. Training activities include e-Learning courses on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament and EU policies as well as supporting 36 Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Internships in members of the Network between 2018 and 2021.

EXPORT CONTROLS

71. In 2020, COARM (the Council Working Party on Conventional Arms Export) started work on the implementation of the deliverables included in the Council Conclusions regarding the review of the Common Position 2008/944 CFSP on arms export control⁵. Following agreement in COARM, the European External Action Service launched in October an online database on its website allowing the public to consult and analyse the data on Member States' arms exports in a user-friendly manner. This database has been broadly welcomed as a significant increase in transparency on arms export. The database contains information on the value, destination and type of arms export licenses and actual exports from Member States, and will be updated on an annual basis. Furthermore, COARM prepared a Council Decision on end-user certificates for the export of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. This Decision was adopted in January 2021, and contributes to further convergence among Member States' arms export policies. COARM continued its outreach to and regular dialogue with a variety of stakeholders, including civil society organisations, the ICRC and representatives from the European defence industry.

⁴ available at <https://www.nonproliferation.eu/activities/online-publishing/non-proliferation-papers/>

⁵ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/40660/st12195-en19.pdf>

72. The EU also continued its outreach activities to support third countries in setting up arms export control system, and to promote the universalisation of the ATT. Under Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/101 of 23 January 2018 and its successor Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1464 of 12 October 2020 on the promotion of effective arms export controls, implemented by the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA), a number of workshops and individual assistance events took place, mostly in a virtual format due to the pandemic. In addition, further regional outreach activities, tailored national assistance programmes and ad hoc individual assistance workshops were carried out under Council Decision (CFSP) 2017/915, implemented by BAFA and Expertise France, supporting the Arms Trade Treaty's effective implementation and universalisation.
73. Political Dialogue meetings on arms export control issues were held in 2020 with Norway and the United States. These political dialogues provided a forum for fruitful discussions on matters of mutual interest, such as export policies to specific destinations, compliance and control issues and the Arms Trade Treaty process.
74. In 2020, the EU continued to regularly update its regulations to reflect developments in multilateral export control regimes. Thus, the European Commission adopted a Delegated Regulation on 7 October 2020, updating the EU dual use control list in line with decisions taken in multilateral export control regimes in 2019, and introduced new controls for, e.g. law enforcement monitoring software and digital forensics tools. The 2020 update of the EU control list also introduced controls on 24 additional chemicals, including Novichok nerve agent precursors, in line with the agreement reached at the Intersessional Meeting of the Australia Group in February 2020, and in order to prevent the trade in precursors of chemical weapons.

75. The Dual-Use Coordination Group continued to support the effective and consistent implementation of export controls in the EU. New functionalities of the ‘Dual-Use Electronic System’ were released in 2020 to adjust the system to regulatory changes, e.g. the 2019 updated control list and secured electronic consultations between competent authorities. In consideration of Brexit, a new functionality was introduced to support information exchange with the UK Competent Authority under the Northern Ireland Protocol. The EU also advanced its work on the development of an “electronic licensing platform” to be used by Member States on a voluntary basis, and initiated work for the integration of dual-use electronic licensing systems with customs electronic systems under the Single Window initiative. The Export Control Annual Report⁶ was published to ensure transparency regarding export control and licensing activities, and an Export Control Forum was organised on 11 December 2020, bringing together stakeholders from Member States, industry, and civil society⁷.

⁶https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2021/february/tradoc_159415.pdf

⁷ https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/december/tradoc_158495.pdf

76. The review of EU export control policy progressed significantly. The Council and the European Parliament agreed on the modernisation of EU export controls. The comprehensive amendments that were made in order to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of controls include updated definitions and control parameters, harmonisation, simplification and digitalisation of licensing, increased information sharing and cooperation with third countries. The new Regulation will make the existing EU Export control system more effective by introducing a novel 'human security' dimension so the EU can respond to the challenges posed by emerging dual-use technologies – especially cyber-surveillance technologies – that pose a risk to national and international security, including protecting human rights. The new Regulation will be formally adopted and enter into force in 2021. The activities of multilateral export control regimes were significantly affected by the pandemic; plenary meetings had to be cancelled, while virtual meetings allowed working groups to carry on some work. Regardless, the EU participated in the Australia Group Intersessional meeting in Bratislava (5-7 February 2020).

77. The implementation of the EU P2P Export Control Programme to enhance the effectiveness of export control systems for dual-use items and related materials, equipment and technologies continued in six regions. In 2020, the Programme covered 41 countries, including those, which are part of the Export Control Targeted Initiatives with the Science and Technology Centre of Ukraine and the International Science and Technology Centre in Kazakhstan, which cover 14 countries. A number of regional workshops, national assistance events and ad-hoc support seminars took place, mostly virtually due to the pandemic.

78. Intensive coordination of the EU P2P Export Control Programme with the US Department of State Export Control and related Border Security Programme continued. Joint EU-US seminars were organised to exchange information on threat assessment methodologies, to define common impact indicators and to coordinate field assistance. The 6th EU P2P Summer University on Strategic Trade Controls for partner countries of the EU P2P Export Control Programme for Dual-Use Goods was organised in an online format by FPI and JRC on 17-21 August 2020. The EU P2P portal transferred to the official European Union web environment (https://europa.eu/cbrn-risk-mitigation/eu-p2p_en), has been further improved in 2020. It will continue to serve as a platform for all EU outreach programmes on export controls of military and dual-use goods, with the aim of customising information exchange with the EU's partner countries. The programme is funded under the Instrument contributing to Stability and Peace.
79. In 2020, COM JRC further developed the Export Control Handbook for Chemicals, making available the database on the JRC portal. A second revision of the handbook will be published in spring 2021. Reference: <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/news/world-trade-controls-export-control-handbook-chemicals>
80. In January 2021, COM JRC published the new TIM Dual-use online platform, allowing to map over 70 million research abstracts (Scopus), patents (Patstat) and EU-funded projects (CORDIS database) with dual-use relevance. Reference: <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/science-update/tim-dual-use-tool-track-possible-dual-use-relevance-research-and-innovation-results>

81. 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 their proliferation. The MTCR participating governments have committed themselves to adherence to common export policy guidelines (the MTCR Guidelines), which apply to an integral common list of controlled items (the MTCR Equipment, Software and Technology Annex). MTCR partners regularly exchange information about relevant national export licensing issues. The MTCR guidelines and control lists constitute an international best practices benchmark for controlling exports of missile-related items and technologies.
82. An issue of fundamental importance for the EU in the MTCR context remains the blocked accession to the regime of nine EU Member States, namely Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.
83. Moreover, continuity and predictability in chairing export control regimes such as the MTCR is key to the functioning and credibility of these regimes. The EU Member States who are members of the MTCR submitted an informal paper ‘On Chairmanship issues’ for consideration of the plenary meeting exploring options for encouraging and supporting a sustainable chairmanship of the Regime. The EU will continue to engage in discussions with members on the various options. In the context of the Regime, 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 Iran and the DPRK.

SPACE

84. The EU and its Member States continued to promote the preservation of a safe, secure and sustainable space environment and the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis. We continued to stress the importance of transparency and confidence-building measures and the need to advocate for responsible behaviour in outer space in the framework of the United Nations. In this respect, the EU delivered space-related statements at the UN General Assembly.

85. The EU and its Member States remained strongly committed to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, which is essential for the strengthening of international security and stability and for safeguarding the long-term use of the space environment for peaceful purposes. We continued to express our concern about the development of all anti-satellite weapons and capabilities, including earth-based, and underline the importance of addressing such developments promptly and as part of international efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space.

86. The EU and its Member States reaffirmed their satisfaction with the adoption of the preamble and 21 Guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, which were adopted by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, and endorsed by a resolution of the UN General Assembly in 2019⁸. The Guidelines are an important addition to the transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space⁹.

⁸ https://www.unoosa.org/res/oosadoc/data/documents/2019/a/a7420_0_html/V1906077.pdf

⁹ https://www.unoosa.org/pdf/gadocs/A_68_189E.pdf

87. The EU and its Member States welcomed the adoption of a new resolution on reducing threats through responsible behaviour¹⁰, which is a timely step to reduce threats and risks related to outer space and to promote responsible behaviour in outer space, notably in the framework of the United Nations. They encouraged all countries to engage constructively for getting a common understanding of responsible behaviour in outer space, to which the EU will jointly contribute as well.

WMD NON-PROLIFERATION CLAUSES

88. 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 2020, negotiations were also held in with the United Kingdom to this effect, in preparation of Brexit and future EU-UK relations. In line with the joint decision of the EU and Cuba on the provisional application of certain parts of the new EU-Cuba agreement, the first ever EU-Cuba WMD Non-Proliferation Dialogue took place in Brussels in March 2019, based on the WMD clause in the new agreement, and a second dialogue was held online in September 2020.

¹⁰ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/36>

OTHER MULTILATERAL FORA

G7

89. The EU continued to participate actively in meetings of the G7 Non-proliferation Directors' Group (NPDG). In 2020, the EU participated in the meetings under the presidency of the United States, which focused on topical non-proliferation and disarmament issues as well as on achieving further progress in the coordination of the work of NPDG and the G7 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, in particular by establishing a closer link between policy priorities and project activities.
90. The EU remains committed to the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, in particular through the technical assistance (threat assessment, national action plans) provided worldwide by the EU Centres of Excellence Initiative on CBRN risk mitigation. The initiative will also contribute implementing the pilot project led by the Global Partnership, a Signature Initiative to Mitigate Biological Threat in Africa, with the new LABPLUS AFRICA project.
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