



CZECH REPUBLIC

Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

79th Session of the General Assembly

First Committee: General Debate

Statement by

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New York, 9 October 2024

As delivered

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Thank you, Chair,

Let me express my sincere congratulations to you on your election as the Chair of the First Committee.

Czechia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

We condemn in the strongest terms Russia's continued aggression against Ukraine. As one of the five Permanent Members of the Security Council, Russia should be one of the main guarantors of international security and not the main destabiliser. What is more, Russia continues to abuse procedural rules to suppress the participation of observers across most non-proliferation and disarmament fora.

Russia's war has ramifications far beyond the borders of Ukraine and Europe, resulting in soaring food prices and the volatility of world energy supplies. In the field of weapons of mass destruction, Russia's reckless nuclear rhetoric, coercion, intimidation and blackmailing represents a threat to global stability and the entire arms control and non-proliferation architecture.

Unfortunately, we are also witnessing further escalation by Russia: using chemical agents as a method of warfare on the battlefield in Ukraine; disrespecting UNGA Resolutions to fuel its own war; and announcing the deployment of nuclear weapons to further intimidate its neighbors. A week doesn't go by without a Russian official threatening nuclear destruction of some fellow UN member state.

This is why it is in the interest of mankind to ensure that all P5 members of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) act as responsible Nuclear Weapons States, and be as transparent as possible about their nuclear arsenals. In that regard, we remain concerned by China's opaque nuclear buildup that contradicts its NPT commitments and stated openness, and we urge China to engage in meaningful arms control discussions.

Chair,

The NPT is the cornerstone of the global security architecture and Czechia considers all three pillars of the Treaty to be of equal importance. That said, the seizure of the Zaporizhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) by the Russian Federation is of grave concern. We resolutely condemn and refuse all previous statements that the ZNPP belongs to the Russian Federation. The ZNPP must be returned under the full control of the competent Ukrainian authorities. It is crucial that nobody draws false parallels between Russia's illegal and unjustified aggression and Ukraine's inherent right to defend itself. Moreover, Russia's missile attacks against Ukrainian vital energy infrastructure directly caused the disconnection of several nuclear power reactors. It applies in particular to sub-stations

which are essential for nuclear safety. We appreciate the central and impartial role the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) continues to play in the field of nuclear safety, particularly with regards to the ZNPP. We further welcome the recent resolution on Ukraine by the IAEA General Conference.

Chair,

When it comes to Iran and its nuclear activities, the International Atomic Energy Agency has once again concluded that it cannot guarantee that Iran's nuclear programme is only for peaceful purposes. Moreover, Iran is clearly intensifying its nuclear programme, and the reports of possible Russian-Iranian military nuclear cooperation, if true, would fundamentally undermine the core principles of the NPT. We call upon Iran to cease fuelling Russia's war, clarify all outstanding safeguards issues with the IAEA and honor its legal obligations and international non-proliferation commitments.

Similarly, we remain deeply concerned by the continued proliferation crisis around the DPRK, further amplified by Russia's undermining of UNSC Resolutions. Despite its professed advocacy for multilateral obligations, Russia has moved to conduct illegal arms trade with North Korea.

Czechia will continue to support the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with all the means at our disposal. Some countries, for their own political self-interest, seek to discredit export controls resulting from non-proliferation commitments. We recall that the same countries, namely China, are making non-proliferation controls extremely challenging through their civil-military fusion programmes.

Finally, on emerging technologies and artificial intelligence. These are new domains in need of international oversight. The norms of responsible use and behavior in this area should be developed, including space, where novel challenges are increasing, particularly due to Russia's latest moves.

Thank you Chair.