



# CZECH REPUBLIC

## Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations

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79<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly

### First Committee: Cluster 1 – Nuclear Weapons

Statement by

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New York, 21 October 2024

*As delivered*

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Thank you Chair, distinguished delegates,

Czechia fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

First, on nuclear disarmament. We hear the frustration of many at the lack of progress – and in some cases reversal – in global nuclear disarmament. We share the desire to live in a world free of nuclear weapons, free from the dangers of war. But we must be frank about the reason for the general lack of progress on nuclear disarmament. That reason is Russia.

From its illegal occupation of parts of Georgia to its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia has made clear what it thinks of the rights of other countries to live in peace and prosperity. No international obligations and commitments that Russia has puts its name to, including the UN Charter, the OSCE fundamental principles or the Budapest Memorandum, could stop its imperial wars. For countries like Czechia, membership in NATO and its extended nuclear deterrence remain the ultimate bulwark against Russia's aggressive intent. Russia's actions have unfortunately rolled back efforts in nuclear disarmament by decades.

Russia's string of violations of all major arms control agreements it has signed up to have left the world arms control architecture in tatters. Russia's suspension of the New Start Treaty has further exacerbated global tensions, already high as a result of its invasion of Ukraine. What is more, not content with violating international norms and obligations, Russia now appears intent on becoming the world's most dangerous proliferator, clandestinely trading arms and technologies with Iran and the DPRK.

Chair,

The UN system never envisioned that one of its founding members, moreover a permanent member of the UN Security Council, would attempt to destroy it from within. It is therefore up to the rest of us to salvage what is left of the global non-proliferation and arms control architecture.

My second point is on the NPT. We welcome the broad engagement of all NPT state parties, a testimony that the Treaty remains the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation. We remain deeply committed to all three pillars of the NPT. It is therefore regrettable that unreasonable demands of a handful of states resulted, again, in the Second PrepCom being unable to agree on a final outcome document, despite the honourable effort of the Kazakh Chair. We hope the resulting Chair's summary will provide a useful guide for our work as we head into 2025.

Third, on the IAEA. We reiterate our full and unwavering support to the IAEA and its safeguards system. We look forward to further strengthening the safeguards system, and call upon all remaining NPT State Parties that have not yet done so to ratify and bring into force their Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols. There is no alternative. The universalization of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol is the only way forward. We have full trust that the Agency will ensure full, impartial, independent and objective implementation of these safeguards. It is under such safeguards agreements that the AUKUS project is operating and is therefore fully compliant and consistent with NPT obligations and the IAEA safeguards. In much the same spirit, we have full confidence in the ability and expertise of Japan in releasing ALPS treated water from the Fukushima Power Station. We have full trust in the expert assessment of the IAEA to ensure that these steps are conducted according to the highest standards of nuclear safety.

Lastly, on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. On the CTBT, we urge all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty. In this context, we commend the excellent work of the CTBTO Executive Secretary Robert Floyd, whose efforts have been instrumental in this regard. We remain extremely concerned by the Russian de-ratification of the CTBT, which coupled with Russia's nuclear threats, further undermines global disarmament efforts. We also regret that negotiations on the FMCT have not begun, and we encourage those concerned to respect their moratoria on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices.

And finally, our position remains unchanged on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; it is fundamentally misconceived and at odds with the existing non-proliferation architecture. It risks undermining the NPT. And it does not take into account the current security environment. The only credible path to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation remains with the NPT.

Thank you, Chair.