

REVIVING ARMS CONTROL IN A DYNAMIC STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT¹

RESOLUTION 472

The Assembly,

1. **Recognising** that the Alliance faces a volatile strategic environment, characterised by growing systemic competition and rapid technological change;
2. **Reaffirming** NATO's longstanding commitment to support and strengthen arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation as reaffirmed by NATO Heads of State and Government at the 2021 Brussels Summit;
3. **Applauding** the agreement between the United States and Russia to extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) and open a Strategic Stability Dialogue;
4. **Deploring** Russia's non-compliance with other arms control agreements, including the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, the Treaty on Open Skies, the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC);
5. **Concerned** by the rapid and unprecedented expansion of China's strategic nuclear arsenal, and, in light of this development, Beijing's refusal to engage in international arms control talks;
6. **Aware** that Emerging and Disruptive Technologies (EDT) can revolutionise future military capabilities, which may challenge existing international arms control frameworks and undermine strategic stability;
7. **Emphasising**, however, that EDTs may also render verification regimes more comprehensive and effective, thereby strengthening international arms control;
8. **Recalling** that, as space technology has advanced rapidly in recent decades, so too has the need for a more robust arms control framework preventing the weaponisation of space, especially the deployment of offensive weapons in space;
9. **Reiterating** Allies' policy to forgo offensive weapons in space, while **condemning** Russian and Chinese deployments of offensive weapons in space as a threat to global peace and security;
10. **Underscoring** that the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the threat of biological pathogens to global health and security while also raising awareness of the potential spectre of bioterrorism;
11. **Mindful** that rapid advances in the field of biotechnology make biotechnological tools and applications more accessible to the public, and could facilitate future acts of bioterrorism;
12. **Convinced** that in an uncertain strategic environment, arms control and collective defence and deterrence must go hand in hand and **welcoming** Allied support for further arms control negotiations with the aim of improving Alliance security, taking into account the prevailing international security environment;

¹ presented by the Science and Technology Committee and adopted by the Plenary Assembly on Monday 11 October 2021

13. **URGES** member governments and parliaments of the North Atlantic Alliance:
- a. to maintain a safe, secure, effective and survivable Allied nuclear deterrent that can effectively adapt to the rapid technological change taking place today;
 - b. to work together to strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) which is the only credible path to nuclear disarmament. ;
 - c. to maintain pressure on Russia to uphold its commitments and international obligations to existing arms control frameworks while also encouraging Russia to work with Allies to strengthen the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and the 1972 Biological Toxins and Weapons Convention (BTWC);
 - d. to engage Chinese leaders directly on the need for their participation in arms control by identifying the shared benefits that mutual, comprehensive, and verifiable arms control can provide for all parties;
 - e. to encourage public debate regarding the benefits, objectives, and utility of international arms control;
 - f. to enhance the use of NATO as an important platform for in-depth discussion and close consultations on international arms control efforts between all 30 member states, with the aim of jointly crafting comprehensive, coherent, and united positions for future arms control negotiations that will improve the security of the Alliance;
 - g. to jointly explore preliminary rules-of-the-road, standards, and norms governing the global deployment of EDTs in military systems in order to preserve strategic stability in the future;
 - h. to evaluate how parties can best mobilise EDTs to enhance arms control verification mechanisms, making arms control increasingly robust, comprehensive, and effective;
 - i. to increase funding for Allied research and development (R&D) of EDTs – especially the seven EDTs² identified in NATO’s “Coherent Implementation Strategy on Emerging and Disruptive Technologies” – to maintain NATO’s technological edge;
 - j. to support initiatives to enhance safety and security in outer space, which can contribute to the development of a new arms control framework that could prevent the weaponisation of space and build directly upon the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which remains the foundation on which space arms control rests;
 - k. to increase awareness of both the spectre of biological threats and the importance of biodefence with national parliaments and the public;
 - l. to evaluate closely if and how measures to detect and prevent the proliferation of dual-use biological materials and equipment can be improved, and
 - m. to strengthen the international regulatory framework for biodefence by providing more support for the BWTC and implementation Support Unit, which is woefully underfunded and understaffed, and explore opportunities for the adoption of an effective verification protocol whose aim would be to monitor and assess the compliance with the Convention.

² Artificial intelligence (AI), data and computing, autonomy, quantum-enabled technologies, biotechnology and human enhancements, hypersonic technologies, and space