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URUGUAY DESIGNATED AS HCOC CHAIR FOR 2025-2026



On 4 June 2025, Ambassador Alex Wetzig from Chile [officially handed over the Chairmanship of The Hague Code of Conduct to Uruguay](#) on the occasion of the 24th Annual Regular Meeting of subscribing states in Vienna. The new Chair is Ambassador Alejandro Garofali Acosta, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations in Vienna and ambassador of Uruguay to Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. Until September 2024, Amb. Garofali was Director for Institutional Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Uruguay. Until 2021, he served as Ambassador of Uruguay to the Swiss Confederation and to the Principality of Liechtenstein, as well as Permanent Representative to the Universal Postal Union, based in Bern. Formerly, he was Ambassador to Ethiopia and Kenya, Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the African Union, the UN Environment Program-UNEP, UN-Habitat and UNECA, resident in Addis Ababa. Since entering foreign service in 1997 until being appointed as ambassador in Africa, Amb. Garofali has served in various diplomatic positions in the United States of America, Sweden and other Nordic and Baltic countries, as well as having worked at several directorates of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Montevideo (covering functions in economic, political, regional integration, minister's office, among others areas). H.E. Ambassador Dr. Garofali holds a Doctorate (Ph.D.) in Law and Economics of Sustainable Development (Catholic University of Ávila, Spain) and a Master in Business Administration and Management (Polytechnic University of Catalonia). He has a degree in International Relations (University of the Republic, Uruguay) and has completed diplomatic training at the Foreign Service Academy of Uruguay (Artigas Institute, Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

HCOC ANNUAL REGULAR MEETING

The Annual Regular Meeting of the HCoC took place on 4-5 June 2025. While states failed to agree on public communiqué to be published at this meeting, several delegations published their statements, in particular the EU. The [EU statement](#) refers to its continuous support to the Code and condemns cases of missile proliferation and missile use. It also notes that *'the Code was conceived as an instrument to be continuously developed in order to further its aims'* and that states should consider reflecting on ways in which such developments could be considered, *'from the ever growing relevance of the HCoC to space to the practical implementation of the Code'*.



LOOKING BACK AT THE CHILEAN CHAIRMANSHIP

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Amb. Alex Wetzig held the Chairmanship of the Hague Code of Conduct from April 2024 to June 2025 on behalf of Chile. He reflects on the role of the Code in the current environment and its possible evolutions going forward.



HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CODE IN THE CURRENT GEOPOLITICAL ENVIRONMENT?

In today's world, where regional conflicts and great-power competition overlap with rapid technological advances, the Hague Code of Conduct is more vital than ever. By committing to annual declarations miscalculation and unintended escalation. At a time when new missile technologies and defense systems can shift strategic balances overnight, the Code's simple but binding transparency measures offer a common foundation for dialogue, helping to prevent crises before they start.



WHAT ARE THE DYNAMICS WITHIN THE CODE? HOW IS THE CONTEXT IMPACTING DISCUSSIONS AND THE FUNCTIONING OF THE CODE, BUT ALSO ITS ROLE?

The Code's voluntary and inclusive nature brings together a diverse membership, from major missile holders to states without any ballistic capabilities, each with its security concerns. This diversity drives open, sometimes challenging, discussions on subjects such as notification thresholds, reporting formats, and the scope of missile types covered. Recent advances in hypersonic glide vehicles (HGVs), dual-use space launchers, and precision guidance have pushed delegations to revisit technical definitions and improve notification rules. At the same time, outreach efforts have strengthened continuity and encouraged non-subscribing states to join. All of these dynamics show that the Code is not static but evolves in response to the changing security landscape.



DO YOU SEE NECESSARY EVOLUTIONS FOR THE CODE TO REMAIN RELEVANT IN THE COMING YEARS?

Yes. To keep pace with emerging challenges, the Code should refine its technical parameters and update its reporting templates for easier comparison. It should also consider a more permanent Troika or steering committee to ensure institutional memory and rapid response to new threats. Expanding digital tools for submission and analysis of declarations will improve efficiency. Finally, deeper engagement with youth and civil society, along with targeted universalization campaigns in under-represented regions, will both widen the Code's membership and strengthen the shared culture of transparency that underpins global security.

NEWS ABOUT THE PROJECT

SIDE EVENT IN THE MARGINS OF THE ARM



On 4 June 2025, the FRS organised a [side event in the margins of the HCoC Annual Regular Meeting](#). In many regions, a number of countries are currently developing or acquiring ballistic missiles. In addition to geopolitical factors, technological developments are modifying the role of ballistic missiles in military strategy: on the one hand, they are increasingly precise and some have the ability to aim very specific targets, on the other hand, the generalisation of missile defence means that relatively simple short-range systems can lose their relevance. This side event assessed the drivers of ballistic

missile proliferation and explored the role of arms control and confidence building measures in the current context. This side event was kicked off by remarks from Stefan Tressing, Deputy Head of Division, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Export Control, European External Action Service (EEAS). The 2024-2025 Chair, Amb. Alex Wetzig Abdale (Chile) and the 2025-2026 Chair Amb. Alejandro Garofali Acosta (Uruguay) also delivered remarks. Among the panellists, Prof. Sitki Egeli (Izmir University of Economics) evoked the technical evolutions in missiles leading to evolution and Dr Polina Sinovets (OCNP) discussed the lessons learned from the war against Ukraine with regards to missiles. Dr Javed Alam (CAPS) evoked the drivers of missile acquisition in South Asia and Ms Eva-Nour Repussard (BASIC) mentioned the case of non-state actors. Ms Emmanuelle Maitre (FRS) concluded with the role of CBMs and arms control in the current context.



FINAL MEETING OF THE YOUTH GROUP



The first cohort of the HCoC Ballistic Missile and Launcher Youth Group finished its session with an in-person visit in Vienna in June 2025. The group attended the ARM side-event and was briefed by the UNODA and UNOOSA in Vienna. They also took part to a workshop on space security organised jointly with European Space Policy Institute (ESPI). At the EU Delegation in Vienna, they had an opportunity to exchange with EU diplomats, as well as the Chilean and Uruguayan Chairs of the HCoC. Finally, they were received by the Austrian Foreign Ministry where they learned more about the functioning of the HCoC and had a chance to present the report that they have worked on since the beginning of the project. This report will be published in the summer.

NEWS ABOUT THE PROJECT

REGIONAL SEMINAR IN THE PHILIPPINES

➤➤➤ On 22-23 January 2025, the Philippines hosted a seminar dedicated to missile proliferation and the HCoC in particular, organised by FRS with the support of the EU. More than 50 participants represented 12 regional countries discussed on missile developments in Asia-Pacific, the role of confidence-building measures and how to promote space activities while opposing the proliferation of WMD delivery vehicles.

Report, pictures and videos about the seminar [here](#).



HCOC WORKSHOP IN NEPAL

In cooperation with the Institute of Foreign Affairs, a workshop was organised in Nagarkot, Nepal, on 6-7 February 2025. Officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nepali Army, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Nepali Police, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, among others, and experts from the UNRCPD, exchanged on the potential benefits for Nepal to join the HCoC.



NEWS ABOUT MISSILE PROLIFERATION

NEW MTCR POLICY PUBLISHED BY THE US STATE DEPARTMENT

On 3 January 2025, President Biden issued a [National Security Memorandum](#) to update policy guidance for the US implementation of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). As noticed by [Vann van Diepen](#), this new policy, published a few days before the end of the Democratic administration, will mostly aim at making it easier for the United States to export missile technologies. In particular, it will offer Washington 'flexibility' to transfer Category I items (full missiles, UAVs and space launch vehicle) to partners and allies 'with strong export control systems,' will ease the possibility to assist MTCR partners in their missile programmes, and allow the United States to facilitate support for some space launch vehicles (SLV) programmes in MTCR and non-MTCR countries. Regarding Category 1 items, the MTCR asks its partners to show a '[strong presumption of denial](#)' when confronted to export requests. US policy has historically adopted complete denial towards non-MTCR partners, but occasional acceptance to export towards MTCR partners, as illustrated in the sales of Tomahawk cruise missiles to Japan and Australia in 2023. This new policy also shows the willingness in the United States to implement differentiated export control policy for ballistic missiles and SLVs, which [contrasts with the traditional approaches](#) according to which both types of object had to be subjected to similar rules. This new policy shows the [wide level of flexibility of MTCR partners](#) in determining how they intend to interpret the regime's guidelines and seem to reflect an environment in which it is increasingly difficult to expand regulatory mechanisms and unilateral commitments to prevent missile dissemination.

JAPAN'S HYPERSONIC DEVELOPMENTS

In February 2025, the Japanese Ministry of Defence announced that it had conducted a test launch of a domestically produced [hypersonic glide vehicle](#). The prototype, known as [HVGP](#) (Hyper Velocity Gliding Projectile) was made public as a project in 2020. The glide vehicle is launched by a solid rocket booster, which allows the [different versions deployed](#) to have a range of respectively 900 km (Block 1) and 2000 km to 3000 km (Block 2). The 2025 test took place in California, where the three previous tests had also been set in August and November 2024. Entry into service of the HVGP is expected in [2026](#). These developments are justified by the Japanese Ministry of Defence as a way to respond to a degrading environment where the missile threat is increasing in East Asia. According to the [National Security Strategy](#), '*these capabilities [will] in the case of missile attacks by an opponent, enable Japan to mount effective counterstrikes against the opponent to prevent further attacks while defending against incoming missiles by means of the missile defense network.*'

SELECTED MISSILE TESTS

Tayfun:



- 3 January 2025

Third test of the Turkish short-range ballistic missile [Tayfun](#). The missile, produced by Roketsan, was already tested in 2022 and 2023.



Haft II / Abdali:



- 3 May 2025

Successful launch of the [Haft II / Abdali](#) announced by the Pakistani Armed forces.



Sapsan:



- June 2025

Ukraine announces the testing in combat of its domestically produced short-range system known as [Sapsan](#) or Hrim-2. The missile could have a range of 300 km and have entered serial production in 2025.



SELECTED SLV LAUNCHES

Long March 12 (CZ-12):



- 30 November 2024

[Successful debut for the Long March-12](#) launch vehicle on its inaugural flight from China's first commercial spaceport of Wenchang, on Hainan Island. With a 3.8 m diameter, this rocket can integrate four engines and therefore has increased payload capacity compared to other Long March rockets.



New Glenn:



- 16 January 2025

[First launch](#) for the partially reusable two-stage launcher New Glenn, developed by Blue Origin. The prototype was successfully injected into medium-range orbit but the recovery of the first stage failed.



Spectrum:



- 3 March 2025

Failed attempt by Isar Aerospace to launch its [first orbital rocket Spectrum](#) from Andøya Spaceport (Norway).



END NOTE

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- Mykola Bondarenko, 'Open-source analysis of the potential configuration and kinetic performance of the Oreshnik ballistic missile,' [Challenges and Issues of Modern Science](#), June 2025.
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INFORMATION AND CONTACT



- Organisation website: [Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique](#)
- Further information on the project implementation available [here](#).
- Project website: [Supporting the Hague Code of Conduct](#).

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