

## “Unilateral steps and increased secrecy on arms proliferation endanger the peaceful future of the world”



### Message from High Representative Josep Borrell to the Ninth EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference

“Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

it is a pleasure to welcome you to the ninth Annual European Union Non-proliferation and Disarmament Conference.

The current barriers to international travel and meetings impose clear limitation to our diplomatic handwork. Yet, multilateralism cannot be at standstill. Now more than ever, we need to reach out to our partners and strengthen our diplomatic ties, looking for common ground to build lasting solutions for a peaceful and stable future. This is particularly relevant at the time of increased geopolitical competition and global uncertainty over arms control, be it chemical, nuclear, or conventional weapons. The recent and worrisome uses of chemical weapons are a case in point. The well-established norm against chemical weapons must be respected globally, and those who violate it must be held accountable for their actions. As a supporter of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the European Union has full confidence in its objectivity, impartiality, and independency. When it comes to nuclear proliferation, upholding and preserving the Non-Proliferation Treaty remains a key priority of EU foreign policy, and we strongly support the three pillars of the Treaty: non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The upcoming Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference will be a unique opportunity to reaffirm the value of this instrument and the need for all States Parties to comply with it. We are actively working to prepare for this important meeting next year, including by supporting regional and thematic conferences.

Through intensive diplomatic engagement backed by EU funded projects, we are promoting the various instruments of the Non-proliferation and Disarmament architecture. And we remain fully committed to the Iran nuclear deal, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Efforts must be redoubled to uphold international norms, to restore dialogue and trust, and to promote transparency and confidence-building measures. This also goes for conventional weapons, which account for over 500.000 deaths each year. 500.000 deaths each year! This is by far the largest number of casualties of armed violence. And to counter the diversion of arms and ensure a safe stockpiling, the EU has many instruments in place, including strict exports controls and increased transparency measures.

Last month, the European External Action Service launched an online database on its website that allows everyone to consult and analyse the data on Member States’ arms exports in a user-friendly manner. We call on other exporters to follow this example, and to share data on their exports as well. This is not only a direct contribution to peace and stability, but it is also a confidence-building measure and a way to scrutinize and hold authorities to be accountable.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must avoid entering into new arms races – whether nuclear, conventional, or involving new technologies. Unilateral steps and increased secrecy on arms proliferation endanger the peaceful future of the world.

At times when the global non-proliferation architecture is under pressure, we must strive to preserve and to strengthen it. And that is why we welcome the important role of the UN in this regard and we will continue to cooperate closely with them. And it is why we call on the US and Russia to extend the New START Treaty before it expires in February 2021. We also encourage negotiations for broader future agreements. In all these areas, dialogue with our global partners is of essence to rebuild mutual trust in Arms Control Non- Proliferation and Disarmament.

Thank you for your work and I wish you a fruitful and open discussion”.



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## EUNPD 2020 Conference

### Statements (in order of appearance)

[Statement by United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, \*Izumi Nakamitsu\*](#)

[Statement by the Director-General of the Department of Arms Control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, \*Fu Cong\*](#)

[Statement by United States Assistant Secretary of State, Bureau of International Security and Non-Proliferation, \*Christopher Ashley Ford\*](#)

[Statement by the President-designate of the 2020 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, \*Gustavo Zlauvinen\*](#)

[Statement by the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons \(OPCW\), \*Fernando Arias\*](#)

## EUNPD 2020 Conference

### Resources

[EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference Agenda](#)

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## EU NEWS

### The EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Conference

The Ninth EU Non-proliferation and Disarmament Conference was held virtually on 12 - 13 November 2020. Organised by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI) on behalf of the EU Consortium of independent non-proliferation and disarmament think tanks the Conference has been, since 2012, one of the key non-proliferation and disarmament events worldwide.

The conference addressed several pressing issues of the field, including ways to rebuild mutual trust in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament; how to tackle arms diversion; the impact of artificial intelligence and related technologies; and the similitudes between biological weapons and pandemics and lessons learned from Covid-19.

The conference was attended by over 420 experts from over 54 different countries, including experts and representatives from governments and international organizations and high-level speakers from public institutions, international organisations and civil society. Opened by a message from the Vice-President of the European Commission and High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, *Josep Borrell*, and remarks from United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, *Izumi Nakamitsu*, the Conference included keynote speeches from Amb. *Gustavo Zlauvinen*, President-designate of the 2020 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and Amb. *Fernando Arias*, Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Further speakers included US Assistant Secretary of State, *Christopher Ford*, and the Director-General of the Department of Arms Control of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, *Fu Cong*, besides renowned academics, researchers and officials from around the world.

The EU Non-proliferation and Disarmament Conference demonstrated once again the EU's strong commitment and support for multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament as well as the rules-based order.

## NETWORK NEWS

### The EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Next Generation Workshop

The EU Non-proliferation and Disarmament Next Generation Workshop was held virtually on 25 November 2020. The event was organized by the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), on behalf of the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium.

14 young professionals were selected among over 50 applications to discuss pressing issues of the Arms Control, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament field and present fresh ideas and views on how to address the field's main challenges. Specifically, this year, the Workshop cover the following topics:

- The Future of Nuclear Arms Control and Non-Proliferation in an Era of Crumbling Treaties
- Arms Trade Regulation and the Fight Against Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)
- Regional Threats to Non-Proliferation and Arms Control
- The Impact of Emerging Technologies on International Security and Arms Control: From Cyber Attacks to Autonomous Weapons

Presentations were followed by comments from other participants, including EU officials.

The Workshop brought together over 100 participants from 26 different countries, contributing significantly to the advancement of fresh thinking and news ideas on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

For more information:

[EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Next Generation Agenda – Workshop Website](#)