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General and complete disarmament: addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons: providing victim assistance and environmental remediation to Member States affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons

Austria, Chile, Guatemala, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, New Zealand, Philippines, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan: draft resolution

Addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons: providing victim assistance and environmental remediation to Member States affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 78/240 of 22 December 2023,

Expressing deep concern that more than 2,000 nuclear explosive tests have been conducted worldwide, including in Non-Self-Governing Territories,

Recognizing that the consequences of the use and testing of nuclear weapons have transcended national borders, contaminated environments, and continue to hamper socioeconomic development, threaten food security and harm the health of current and future generations, and recalling its resolution 78/34 of 4 December 2023 in this regard,

Acknowledging that the consequences of the use and testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices include not only physical harms but also harms to mental health, such as post-traumatic stress disorders and other forms of trauma, as well as the disruption of cultural practices and displacement on a long-term or permanent basis of communities of affected Member States,

Acknowledging also the victims of the use and testing of nuclear weapons, and deploring the unprecedented devastation and immense human suffering that the people of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (hibakusha) experienced as a result of the atomic bombings of 1945, as well as the significant harms associated with nuclear weapons testing,

Stressing that the catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed,

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Convinced that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, and alarmed by threats and rhetoric pertaining to the use of nuclear weapons,

Recognizing the importance of maintaining the moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions, and recalling the object and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty,[1]

Recalling that the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons expressed deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and underscoring the increased attention to engaging with affected communities during the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Recalling also the calls made by some States parties at the 2024 Preparatory Committee of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for the development of recommendations on victim assistance and environmental remediation from nuclear weapons use and testing at the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Acknowledging the disproportionate impact of the testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices on Indigenous Peoples, non-self-governing peoples, as well as women and girls,

Recognizing that the implementation of victim assistance and environmental remediation constitutes meaningful steps towards the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the Sustainable Development Goals,[2]

Noting the efforts of Member States and international organizations in addressing environmental remediation and victim assistance,

Affirming the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in addressing contaminated environments,

Recognizing the technical expertise of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation,

Recognizing also that visiting test sites and participating in the annual International Day against Nuclear Tests, unanimously proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/35 of 2 December 2009, raises awareness of the humanitarian and environmental impact,

Recalling the testimonies of survivors and victims of the nuclear tests at the conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, convened by Norway, on 4 and 5 March 2013, Mexico, on 13 and 14 February 2014, and Austria, on 8 and 9 December 2014 and on 20 June 2022, where survivors and victims of the tests' experiences and testimonies contributed to our understanding of the harmful effects of the testing and use of nuclear weapons, especially the gendered and disproportionate impact of ionizing radiation on women and girls,

Noting the humanitarian provisions on victim assistance, environmental remediation, international cooperation and assistance of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,[3] which entered into force on 21 January 2021, and the references to these humanitarian provisions contained in the Vienna Action Plan, adopted at the First Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

[1] See resolution 50/245 and A/50/1027.
[2] See resolution 70/1.
[3] A/CONF.229/2017/8.

on 23 June 2022, and the decisions adopted at the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty, held from 27 November to 1 December 2023,

Recalling the Human Rights Council resolution 51/35 of 7 October 2022 on technical assistance and capacity-building to address the human rights implications of the nuclear legacy in the Marshall Islands,[4] the subsequent Council resolution 57/26 of 10 October 2024, and General Assembly resolution 78/142 of 19 December 2023, entitled "International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan", and noting the efforts by some Member States in this regard,

Noting the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights entitled "Addressing the challenges and barriers to the full realization and enjoyment of the human rights of the people of the Marshall Islands, stemming from the State's nuclear legacy",[5]

Noting also the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons: providing victim assistance and environmental remediation to Member States affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons",[6] in particular the Secretary-General's observations that efforts are under way to establish further mechanisms for the provision of international cooperation and support in relation to victim assistance and environmental assessment and remediation,

Bearing in mind that certain Member States affected by the use and testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices require the technical capacities and resources to effectively assist victims or remediate contaminated environments within their jurisdiction,

1. *Encourages* further international cooperation and discussions to assist victims, and assess and remediate environments contaminated by the use and testing of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, including through bilateral, regional and multilateral frameworks, such as relevant treaties, while acknowledging the significant work in some jurisdictions;

2. *Urges* that Member States which have used or tested nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosive devices, share, as appropriate, technical and scientific information regarding the humanitarian and environmental consequences of such use and testing with Member States affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosive devices, and calls upon Member States in a position to do so to contribute technical and financial assistance, as appropriate;

3. *Recognizes* that responsibilities to address the harms resulting from a detonation of using or testing a nuclear weapon or any other nuclear explosive device lie with the Member States that have done so, subject to international law;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to convene a one-day international meeting on victim assistance and environmental remediation, at an appropriate time in 2026, with the participation of Member States, observers and civil society representatives from organizations accredited with the Economic and Social Council, invites Member States to share their relevant experience, encourages participants to produce a series of recommendations, based on the discussions, and further requests the Secretary-General to report on those recommendations to Member States;

5. *Urges* all States not to carry out nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, to maintain their moratoriums in this regard and to refrain

[4] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A* (A/77/53/Add.1), chap. III, sect. A.

[5] A/HRC/57/77.

[6] A/79/91.

from acts that would defeat the object and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, while stressing that these measures do not have the same permanent and legally binding effect as the entry into force of the Treaty;

6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its eightieth session, under the item entitled "General and complete disarmament", the sub-item entitled "Addressing the legacy of nuclear weapons: providing victim assistance and environmental remediation to Member States affected by the use or testing of nuclear weapons".