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# Conference on Disarmament

30 August 2023

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## **Note Verbale dated 21 August 2023 from The Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations Office and Other International Organizations in Geneva transmitting the joint Statement concerning the announcement of the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus**

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations Office and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament and has the honour to submit the Joint Statement concerning the announcement of the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine requests the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament that this Joint Statement be uploaded on the Conference's website as an official document (and Working Paper) of the 2023 CD session.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine avails itself of the opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament the assurances of its highest consideration.



## Annex

### **Joint Statement, (Panel discussion on agenda item 2, prevention of nuclear war and related materials)**

#### **Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, 13 June 2023 (as delivered)**

Madame President,

Distinguished panellists,

Excellencies,

Dear colleagues,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Albania, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Costa Rica, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Georgia, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, Italy, Ireland, Japan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and my own country, Ukraine.

We express our deep concern over the statements made by the Russian and Belarusian officials concerning the announcement of the deployment of Russian nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus following the agreement signed between the two countries.

Such actions accompanied by the continued harsh nuclear rhetoric by Russia in the context of a war against Ukraine it has itself started – are dangerous and irresponsible, and not least in the light of Russia's decision to purportedly suspend its participation in the New START.

Belarus has been an accomplice since the start of Russia's illegal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. The change of Belarus's non-nuclear status in the revised constitution adopted last year together with the agreement on the deployment of Russia's nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus risks further escalating tensions.

We call on the Belarusian authorities to immediately stop supporting Russia's aggressive war against Ukraine and cancel decisions that could contribute to heightening tensions in the region.

We recall the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear Weapon States issued on January 3, 2022, on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races, which affirms, inter alia, that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Russia's actions and irresponsible nuclear rhetoric stand in stark contradiction to the commitments and principles enshrined in this Statement. We call on Russia to recommit - in words and deeds - to the principles enshrined in that Statement.

Russia's ongoing aggression against Ukraine has a significant negative impact on the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. Russia's blatant contravention of its commitments under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum with Ukraine, as well as other irresponsible acts undermining nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, in particular the ongoing Russian control of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, are detrimental to fulfilling the objectives of the Treaty on Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The overall decline in global nuclear arsenals achieved since the end of the Cold War must continue and not be reversed. The NPT must be upheld as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

I thank you.