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Agenda item 98

Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

Report of the First Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 8 September 2023, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-eighth session the item entitled “Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament” and to allocate it to the First Committee.
2. At its 1st meeting, on 28 September 2023, the First Committee decided to conduct its work in three phases. The first phase would be a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely items 90 to 106, as well as a general debate on the working methods of the Committee and programme planning, namely items 120 and 135; the second phase would be dedicated to thematic discussions; and the third phase would be for action on all draft proposals.
3. At its 2nd to 9th meetings, from 2 to 6 and from 9 to 11 October, the Committee held its general debate on items 90 to 106. At its 10th meeting, on 12 October, the Committee also held its general debate on items 120 and 135. On 13 October, at its 11th meeting, the Committee held exchanges with the Deputy to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and other high-level officials in the field of arms control and disarmament nominated by regional groups. The Committee also held 14 meetings (11th to 24th), on 13, from 16 to 20 and from 23 to 26 October, for thematic discussions and panel exchanges with independent experts. At those meetings, as well as during the action phase, draft resolutions and decisions were introduced and considered. The Committee took action on all draft resolutions and



decisions at its 25th to 30th meetings, on 27 October and from 30 October to 3 November.¹

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts (A/78/268).

II. Consideration of draft resolution [A/C.1/78/L.35](#)

5. On 10 October, the delegation of India, also on behalf of Australia, Bangladesh, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Kenya, Malta, Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Norway, Portugal, Sri Lanka and Sweden, submitted a draft resolution entitled “Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament” (A/C.1/78/L.35). Subsequently, Afghanistan, Austria, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, the Congo, Croatia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Italy, Japan, Kiribati, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mauritius, Montenegro, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Paraguay, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

6. At its 29th meeting, on 2 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.1/78/L.35](#) without a vote (see para. 7).

¹ For an account of the Committee’s discussion of the item, see [A/C.1/78/PV.2](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.3](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.4](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.5](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.6](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.7](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.8](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.9](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.10](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.11](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.12](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.13](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.14](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.15](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.16](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.17](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.18](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.19](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.20](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.21](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.22](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.23](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.24](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.25](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.26](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.27](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.28](#), [A/C.1/78/PV.29](#) and [A/C.1/78/PV.30](#).

III. Recommendation of the First Committee

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that scientific and technological developments can have both civilian and military applications and that progress in science and technology for civilian applications needs to be maintained and encouraged,

Underlining the keen interest of the international community to keep abreast of the latest developments in science and technology of relevance to international security and disarmament and to channel scientific and technological developments for beneficial purposes,

Mindful of the need to regulate the transfer of technologies for peaceful uses, in accordance with relevant international obligations, to address the risk of proliferation by States or non-State actors,

Acknowledging the need to continue the exchange of technologies for peaceful uses, including in accordance with relevant international obligations,

Mindful of the rights of States, reflected in relevant international agreements, regarding the development, production, transfer and use of technologies for peaceful purposes, in accordance with relevant international obligations, as well as the need for all Member States to fulfil their obligations in relation to arms control and disarmament and to prevent proliferation in all its aspects of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery,

Cognizant of the discussions on developments in science and technology at the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the decision of the Ninth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction to develop with a view to establishing a mechanism to review and assess scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention¹ and to provide States parties with relevant advice,²

Cognizant also of the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament in 2023,

Mindful of the discussions in other forums, such as the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the United Nations disarmament machinery,

Noting the discussions on various dimensions of emerging technologies under the framework of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects,³ and recalling the discussions and progress made by the

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1015, No. 14860.

² [BWC/CONF.IX/9](#), sect. II.E.

³ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1342, No. 22495.

Group of Governmental Experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems during its sessions held from 2018 to 2023,

Noting also the discussions within the United Nations and the specialized agencies on developments in the field of information and communications technologies, including in the context of international security,

Acknowledging that the accelerating pace of technological change necessitates a system-wide assessment of the potential impact of developments in science and technology on international security and disarmament, with due regard to avoiding duplication and complementing efforts already under way in United Nations entities and in the framework of the relevant international conventions,

Noting the discussions on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts in the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters,

1. *Invites* Member States to continue efforts to apply developments in science and technology for disarmament-related purposes, including the verification of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation instruments, and to make disarmament-related technologies available to interested States;

2. *Calls upon* Member States to remain vigilant in understanding new and emerging developments in science and technology that could imperil international security, and underlines the importance of Member States engaging with experts from industry, the research community and civil society in addressing this challenge;

3. *Takes note* of the updated report of the Secretary-General on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts;⁴

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session an updated report on the matter;

5. *Encourages* the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters to continue its discussions on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts;

6. *Encourages* Member States to organize events such as conferences, seminars, workshops and exhibitions, at the national, regional and international levels, on the role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament, in order to facilitate multilateral dialogue, as well as dialogue among relevant stakeholders, on current developments in science and technology and their potential impact on international security and disarmament efforts;

7. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session the item entitled “Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament”.

⁴ [A/78/268](#).