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**Strengthening of security and cooperation in the  
Mediterranean region****Strengthening of security and cooperation in the  
Mediterranean region****Report of the Secretary-General****Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction . . . . .	2
II. Replies received from Governments . . . . .	2
Albania . . . . .	2
Algeria . . . . .	3
Burkina Faso . . . . .	6
Cyprus . . . . .	7
Greece . . . . .	8
Spain . . . . .	8
Türkiye . . . . .	17
III. Reply received from the European Union . . . . .	21

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\* [A/77/50](#).



## I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution [76/65](#), requested the Secretary-General to submit a report at its seventy-seventh session on means to strengthen security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request and on the basis of information received from Member States.<sup>1</sup>

## II. Replies received from Governments

### Albania

[Original: English]  
[31 May 2022]

Albania is fully committed to a safe and secure region in the Mediterranean.

In the field of arms transfers, Albania promotes full transparency by reporting every year to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and for the Register of Conventional Arms, the Arms Trade Treaty and the regional report on arms exports (for countries in South-Eastern Europe).

The Ministry of Defence of Albania is a participant in various regional initiatives in the field of security and defence. Parties to these initiatives include some countries of the Mediterranean region. The focus is on cooperation and maintaining an open dialogue between the parties in order to strengthen relations and build mutual trust and confidence.

### South-Eastern European Defence Ministerial process

Albania has promoted the relevance of the South-Eastern European Defence Ministerial process as a successful confidence-building mechanism in South-Eastern Europe, a platform that has strengthened relations among our countries and has contributed to their efforts towards a common Euro-Atlantic future.

The Albanian priorities remain: consolidating the confidence-building mechanism; strengthening military cooperation in South-Eastern Europe; enhancing the level of interaction with other international organizations, namely the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union and the United Nations; contributing to certain operations and missions with the Multinational Peace Force for South-Eastern Europe; enhancing the interoperability of the South-Eastern Europe Brigade and its capability to be deployed in peace support operations; and promoting an open-door policy in order to reaffirm our commitment to the openness of our initiative, which contributes to peace and security in the Euro-Atlantic area.

The Albanian armed forces are engaged, through representatives, at the headquarters of the South-Eastern Europe Brigade and in the framework of the South-Eastern European Defence Ministerial process initiative.

### United States-Adriatic Charter initiative

Through this initiative, Albania supports a policy of “open doors”, as well as the promotion of political dialogue and good neighbourliness, and an increase in cooperation for joint representation, as well as efforts against terrorism and radical extremism. Albania continues to be a great supporter of member countries in the

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<sup>1</sup> In this connection, note verbales dated 14 January 2022 were sent to all Member States, requesting their views on the subject. Any views received after 31 May 2022 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the original language received.

NATO full membership process. The country provides a great contribution to encourage initiatives for the joint contribution of the United States-Adriatic Charter in the international arena.

### **Balkan Medical Task Force**

The aim of the Balkan Medical Task Force is to enhance the utilization of existing military medical capabilities in the Western Balkan region in the framework of a multinational medical unit, facilitating deployments and their sustainability for periods longer than one year. Albania contributes human resources as well as equipment to the initiative, and continues to support initiatives aimed at improving and fostering the role of the Task Force in the region.

### **Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre – Centre for Security Cooperation**

The mission of the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance Centre – Centre for Security Cooperation is to foster dialogue and cooperation on security matters in South-Eastern Europe through a partnership between the countries of the region and their international partners. Also, in the framework of bilateral cooperation with the countries of the region and beyond, the Ministry of Defence participates in continuous activities according to concrete joint cooperation plans. Even within the bilateral framework, the policy of the Ministry of Defence is to promote dialogue and cooperation.

Albania is part of the European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative, which was launched in 2010. The Initiative mirrors the action plan on chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear security implemented inside the European Union. The main objective of the Initiative is to facilitate regional cooperation in order to enhance capabilities.

## **Algeria**

[Original: French]

[31 May 2022]

Algeria recommends that the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution on the strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region on a regular and ongoing basis. Through this resolution, Algeria contributes to the shared resolve to strengthen cooperation on security, cultural and economic issues in the Mediterranean region. Its efforts are demonstrated, among other things, by the actions described below.

### **I. Partnerships developed in the Mediterranean region**

#### **1. Western Mediterranean Forum (5+5 Dialogue)**

Algeria sees the 5+5 Dialogue as an effective forum for strengthening security cooperation. It works to promote a constructive dialogue that increasingly reflects the awareness among member countries of the peace and security challenges facing the region.

The meetings held within the framework of the 5+5 Dialogue have led to the adoption of specific measures to strengthen peace, security and stability in the region. In this context, Algeria emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach that incorporates a security dimension in order to combat and eradicate criminal networks.

The measures envisaged by Algeria take into consideration the link that exists between security and development, the leading role played by Algeria in the fight against terrorism and its contribution to stability and security in the region.

**2. 5+5 Defence Initiative**

In December 2021, the ministers of the member States of the 5+5 Defence Initiative committed themselves, under the Nouakchott joint declaration, to taking action, including effective and sustainable steps against common threats, as part of ongoing projects; to promote joint solutions to cyberthreats through the establishment of the Cyberforum; and to encourage the consideration of the multidimensional effects of pandemics (including the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic) and other major disasters in the region.

They also approved an action plan for 2022, which is currently being implemented and which comprises 56 activities, 4 of which will be led by Algeria.

**3. Mediterranean Dialogue of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization**

In March 2000, Algeria joined the Mediterranean Dialogue of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with the aim of contributing to the strengthening of collective security in the Mediterranean region, on the basis of a comprehensive approach that complements various other initiatives and forums for dialogue in the Mediterranean. Three main areas of cooperation can be identified: high-level dialogue and consultations on regional and international security issues; training and exchange of experiences; and scientific cooperation.

**4. High-level strategic dialogue on regional security and counter-terrorism**

Under the association agreement concluded between them, Algeria and the European Union established a subcommittee on political dialogue, security and human rights, which meets on a regular basis. The two parties also launched a high-level strategic dialogue on regional security. The European Union-Algeria Association Council is a framework for political dialogue, cooperation and exchange between the two parties on security issues.

**5. Mediterranean dialogue of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

Algeria participates actively in meetings on the activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in the Mediterranean region, including efforts to combat terrorism, violent extremism, radicalization and transnational organized crime; migration-related activities; and efforts to address trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

**6. Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centre of Excellence for the North Africa and the Sahel region**

The regional office for North Africa and the Sahel of the Centres of Excellence Initiative, located in Algiers, has made it possible to launch cooperation projects for the mitigation of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks, including with regard to the detection of such materials at border posts, the land transport of chemical and biological products and the management of chemical and biological waste.

**7. CyberSouth regional project on cybercrime with the Mediterranean countries**

Algeria is involved in the development of a joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe aimed at building capacity with respect to cybercrime and electronic evidence in the Mediterranean region.

## **8. Regional cooperation on arms export control**

Together with the other countries of North Africa, Algeria is participating in the arms export control activities initiated by the European Union with the aim of promoting regional dialogue on arms export control and discussion on issues of common interest in this regard among the partner countries concerned.

## **9. Cooperation with the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training**

The partnership between Algeria and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training (CEPOL) has taken the form of a training partnership through the launch of an exchange programme under the regional cooperation project entitled the “European Union–Middle East and North Africa Counter-Terrorism Training Partnership Project” (CEPOL CT). A regional workshop on terrorism in relation to organized crime was held in Algiers in 2020.

## **II. Initiatives launched on the African continent**

Algeria has consistently advocated the strengthening of and support for existing mechanisms in Africa, including those described below, by the relevant international and regional organizations, in particular the United Nations, the African Union and the European Union.

### **1. Coordination in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in Africa**

At the thirty-fifth session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, a decision was adopted on the report of Abdelmadjid Tebboune, President of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria and champion of the fight against terrorism and violent extremism. The report was prepared by Mr. Tebboune in his capacity as coordinator of the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in Africa, a role conferred upon him by the Assembly.

The report contains three main sections: an overview of the terrorist threat on the African continent; an assessment of African Union strategies and tools; and recommendations.

### **2. Efforts by Algeria to combat terrorism in the Sahel**

Several high-level meetings have been held to discuss and identify the measures needed to combat terrorist activities and related scourges in the region. A series of meetings of the chiefs of staff of the armed forces and security services of the main countries concerned (Algeria, Mali, Niger and Mauritania) has also been held under the auspices of the Joint Military Staff Committee of the Sahel Region, making it possible to implement practical and operational measures to ensure coordination among the security forces of the countries concerned.

This cooperation framework has also made it possible to set up training programmes for security agents and customs services, which Algeria provides to the countries of the region to enable them to develop their own administrative, technical and operational capacities in this field.

### **3. African Centre for Studies and Research on Terrorism**

Considered a key operational body whose work forms part of a comprehensive and integrated approach, the Centre reflects the firm will of African States to join forces with the international community to take concrete, urgent and collective action to stop terrorism, in particular through the consolidation of data and research on terrorism.

#### **4. African Police Cooperation Organization**

The African Police Cooperation Organization (AFRIPOL) maintains close cooperation with similar organizations, notably the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol). It is seen as a mechanism for police cooperation between African Union countries, but also as an important actor in the security of the Mediterranean region and a potential focal point for the countries on the northern shore of the Mediterranean basin.

#### **5. Efforts within the framework of the Global Counterterrorism Forum**

Algeria co-chaired a workshop on mainstreaming gender in efforts to prevent and combat violent extremism and terrorism, held in Dakar in May 2022. It participated in the seminar on the theme “Addressing violent extremism conducive to terrorism by targeting rhetoric, mindsets and behaviour”, which was organized by the Capacity-building in the West Africa Region Working Group of the Global Counterterrorism Forum in December 2021.

### **Burkina Faso**

[Original: French]

[31 May 2022]

Burkina Faso is convinced that the following is clear: security cannot be fully assured if the security environment is under threat. In other words, the security of Burkina Faso depends on security at the subregional and regional levels. It therefore calls for cooperation with the countries of the subregion. It also calls for cooperation with the countries of the Mediterranean region.

The Arab crises in general, and the crisis in Libya in particular, have led to the proliferation and illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons in the countries of the Sahel; these weapons have fallen into the hands of armed terrorist groups that are ravaging the region, including the Liptako-Gourma countries (Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso).

In addition, cooperation with the Mediterranean region is fundamental to keeping terrorism in check in the countries of the Sahel. It is evident that a number of terrorist networks and groups involved in the terrorism that has affected some countries in the region since the 1990s are still active; a case in point is Mokhtar Belmokhtar of Al-Mourabitoun, whose network today extends as far as Burkina Faso. Indeed, several terrorist attacks carried out in Burkina Faso seem to bear the signature of this jihadist terrorist group.

From another perspective, Burkina Faso seeks strengthened cooperation because much of the trafficking that takes place from the West African coast to other countries, including European countries, passes through the countries of the Mediterranean. Strengthened cooperation could curb this trafficking. According to several sources, drugs trafficked from Latin America to Europe pass through the countries of the Gulf of Guinea and are then transported through the countries of the Mediterranean.

The same is true of the trafficking of migrants to Europe; the Mediterranean is one of the transit regions, where many West Africans die at sea or in the desert. According to the media, several people of West African origin have been treated as slaves in some countries, in a display of contempt for human dignity and in violation of the basic and fundamental human rights that are recognized and protected by the international human rights conventions and treaties.

Strengthening security and cooperation with the Mediterranean could significantly reduce insecurity and terrorism in the countries of the Sahel, including Burkina Faso.

## Cyprus

[Original: English]  
[31 May 2022]

The stability of the Mediterranean region is a priority for Cyprus and, as a matter of policy, Cyprus seeks to cooperate with all willing partners who share this historical crossroad in order to ensure that security is achieved. The immediate focus of Cypriot priorities is, naturally, the Eastern Mediterranean. Good neighbourly relations and respect for international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the rule of law are the fundamental principles that underpin the policies of Cyprus in its neighbourhood. This principled stance has not always been welcomed or reciprocated by all our neighbours, a fact reflected in the protracted and ongoing violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Cyprus by a neighbouring Member State.

In promoting the objective of long-lasting stability, Cyprus has advanced a policy of establishing, jointly with Greece, trilateral mechanisms of cooperation with its neighbours in the Eastern Mediterranean. These interactions have begun to have tangible results across a broad spectrum of cooperation, in areas such as energy, counter-terrorism, the environment, cybertechnology and innovation, education and many more. These mechanisms have proven effective and flexible, with additional partners joining particular meetings held within their framework, reflecting their capability to engage actors beyond our immediate neighbourhood.

Cyprus is keenly aware of the devastating effects that climate change could have in the Mediterranean, including on security. Dwindling resources, including water, the effects of sea-level rise, warming and desertification, and climate migration are just a few of the insecurity-inducing factors that Mediterranean States should cooperate to mitigate. Environmental security, including with regard to transboundary harm that may be caused by nuclear energy plants, is another field that would benefit from enhanced cooperation in our region.

Energy has always been a priority area for many of our partners in the region and cooperation is needed more than ever, given the instability resulting from conflict and the need to transition to clean energy and phase out fossil fuels. The energy map in our region has been transformed in recent years and cooperation is being recalibrated. Cyprus is pursuing its own energy programme, in full compliance with international law and its sovereignty and sovereign rights. It has delineated its maritime space in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and has concluded bilateral delimitation agreements with neighbouring States on the same legal basis. The importance of the Convention as the indisputable legal framework for all activities in the oceans and seas cannot be overstated. It forms the very foundation of the rules-based nexus of peaceful cooperation and the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes. As the Convention reflects customary international law, it is enforceable by and against nations that are not a party to it, entailing the responsibility of all States to ensure that their actions are in line with the Convention and general international law. Regrettably, not all countries in the region respect international law and the sovereignty and sovereign rights of their neighbours, choosing instead to pursue gunboat diplomacy, to the detriment of all in the region.

Lastly, irregular migration is already a security concern in the Mediterranean. The millions of migrants crossing the Mediterranean are putting themselves in serious danger, fortifying human traffickers in the process, while countries of destination are

struggling to cope with arrivals and asylum applications. The small size of Cyprus has stretched our capabilities in dealing with this phenomenon. Further cooperation in the region, among States of origin, transit and destination, is one of the measures that should be employed. In addition, States that instrumentalize migrants for political ends must desist.

## Greece

[Original: English]  
[26 May 2022]

Respect for international law and the principle of good neighbourly relations is of paramount importance for safeguarding and strengthening peace and security in the Mediterranean region. Greece, as a pillar of stability in the region, has always been committed to the rules of international law and remains a strong advocate of the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Furthermore, Greece has always exercised its sovereign rights in its maritime areas in accordance with the international law of the sea, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, abstaining from activities that could exacerbate tensions and jeopardize regional peace and security. Greece repeatedly stresses the importance of respect for the sovereignty, sovereign rights and jurisdiction each State has over its maritime zones in accordance with international law, including the Convention, and strongly condemns any State's action or rhetoric challenging these principles.

## Spain

[Original: Spanish]  
[31 May 2022]

The twenty-first century has changed the collective perception of international security and its concept. The confluence of new actors, challenges and threats that exacerbate the uncertainty and complexity of our times has made security one of the priorities of the international community.

The Strategic Compass for Security and Defence of the European Union, approved by the Council of the European Union on 21 March 2022, is the new reference for European security. In the document, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery is identified as a persistent threat, given the nuclear programmes of North Korea and Iran, the repeated use of chemical weapons, and the development and deployment of new advanced ballistic, cruise and hypersonic missiles. China and the Russian Federation are expanding their nuclear arsenals and are developing new weapons systems, and regional powers have access to sophisticated conventional weapons systems. In order to promote disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, the European Union will continue to support the central role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; the reduction of the arsenals of the principal nuclear-weapon States in accordance with the agreements adopted after the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms; the maintenance of the global prohibition on chemical weapons; and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

In the 2021 National Security Strategy of Spain, the “proliferation of weapons of mass destruction” is identified among the risks and threats to national security, and “strengthened multilateralism” is cited as an objective to be achieved under its third



strategic pillar: “a Spain that participates in the maintenance of international peace and security and defends its strategic interests”. Such strengthened multilateralism translates into the identification of three lines of action:

- Enabling preventive diplomacy and the role of Spain as an active and committed actor in mediating external conflicts.
- Helping to intensify support for the international regime for the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and disarmament, through the updating of the international control, export and monitoring regime.
- Promoting the implementation of the objectives of the Second National Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security to integrate a gender perspective and make a reality the meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution, and peacebuilding.

In June 2020, the President of the Government of Spain, in collaboration with the National Defence Council, issued National Defence Directive 1/2020, a basic document that set in motion a defence planning cycle, which in its different stages covers a six-year period.

The defence of Spain is based, on the one hand, on its own capabilities and strengths as a contribution to national security conceived as an integrating whole, and, on the other hand, on the practice of an effective multilateralism through which our interests and values are better defended and promoted.

## **I. Defence of multilateralism**

Cyberattacks, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the expansion of radicalized movements and groups, both armed and unarmed, flows of refugees and migrants, trafficking in persons and the rise of radical ideologies are emerging realities that require multilateral responses, political will and cooperation in order to contribute to peace and international stability through substantive results.

The rapid development of new technologies and their widespread use entail a new paradigm in the area of non-proliferation and make it more complex, as in the case, for example, of controls on intangible transfers of information and knowledge. This also applies to the development of new weapons systems, such as remote weapons systems, of particular concern from a humanitarian perspective. To this end, States should multilaterally identify and take the measures needed to maintain effective controls on access to weapons and the related technologies, as well as to continue to guarantee compliance with the principles of the law of armed conflict when such weapons are used.

These observations lead to questions such as how these challenges should be addressed, and what the necessary and most effective ways to address them are. A multidisciplinary strategy that encompasses the fields of intergovernmental cooperation, the development of joint monitoring and tracking tools, the exchange of information and the establishment of new controls or the revision of existing ones will be required. The scope of the strategy encompasses national defences, strengthened multilateral instruments and organizations, cooperation for development, the eradication of illicit trafficking and a range of other issues.

We must provide effective solutions to combat international security risks. The most appropriate road map is political and diplomatic agreement, which should be reflected in legally binding agreements on disarmament and arms control.

Spain is highly involved in the promotion of peace processes and in revitalizing and bringing innovation to the multilateral system with a view to transforming it into an instrument for peace, stability, advancement and progress. This requires arms

reduction and control, the promotion of support for the non-proliferation of weapons, and disarmament, as well as efforts to combat the inequalities of globalization, since this is the only way to come close to achieving the dream of a peace that ranges from security and intercultural coexistence to the balanced and sustainable development of the planet.

Accordingly, Spain supports the effective implementation of treaties and conventions, mainly through the international and regional organizations to which it belongs, such as the United Nations, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, through a comprehensive contribution in the political, economic and technical spheres.

The existence of an effective multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation system based on effective compliance is key to the fulfilment of the obligations imposed on States. This multilateral approach not only increases the system's effectiveness, but also gives it important legitimacy.

There is a need to strengthen the effectiveness of the international system through more cohesive instruments, greater political commitment and further legally binding agreements, thus maintaining the credibility of the system and preventing a weakening of the system by avoiding the emergence of initiatives with objectives that overlap with those of existing treaties and agreements, whose achievements are evident. Regulations should require the fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States and foster rigorous and transparent verification systems accepted by all States. The capacity for consensus should also be expanded in order to establish legal frameworks that lead to real advances in the areas of peace, security, cooperation and global progress.

As a global and European actor, Spain is strongly committed to reforming multilateralism, meaning that we should be more involved in updating international relations and their mechanisms and institutions.

A responsible non-proliferation and disarmament policy requires the promotion of an effective multilateral system by:

- Promoting the universalization, defence and strengthening of treaties, conventions, agreements and international regimes, while avoiding parallel initiatives pursuing objectives that overlap with those of the main disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and conventions and that are independent of the review processes of such treaties and conventions, since they would weaken those processes and call their effectiveness into question.
- Seeking comprehensive political solutions that prevent, deter or stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons.
- Integrating policy on non-proliferation and disarmament into general security policy.
- Considering the possibility of including "non-proliferation clauses" in bilateral and regional relations.
- Strengthening the role of the Security Council.
- Promoting the national fulfilment of international obligations.
- Improving the effectiveness of verification mechanisms through political, economic and technical support.
- Strengthening import and export control systems relating to defence and dual-use materials, as well as enlarging their membership.
- Strengthening control measures for intangible transfers of technology.

- Promoting international information exchange.
- Strengthening technical assistance among States and cooperation for development.
- Promoting legal and responsible trade in defence materials and dual-use technologies, and preventing illicit trafficking.
- Facilitating collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations and industries that share the same objective.

Only an effective multilateral system can successfully tackle the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in combination with other phenomena such as international terrorism, transnational organized crime, failed States and regional conflicts.

## II. Non-proliferation

Spain contributes to the development and construction of a global nuclear non-proliferation architecture.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime. The year 2020 marked the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty. Spain, which acceded to the Treaty in 1987, believes that it is the most valuable tool at our disposal to contain proliferation and promote the nuclear disarmament process, and is the framework which enshrines the inalienable right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Spain calls for the universalization of the Treaty and affirms its total and unequivocal commitment to the three pillars on which it is based; it will reiterate that position at the Review Conference scheduled for August 2022 in New York.

Spain maintains its unswerving support for the safeguards regime set out in article III of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for the purpose of verifying compliance with the obligations assumed by nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. Spain firmly supports the authority of IAEA and the strengthening of its verification and monitoring capacities.

Spain is subject to two independent but closely coordinated safeguards systems: that of IAEA and that of the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). Accordingly, the country's nuclear industry is obliged to periodically declare its stockpile of nuclear material and any resulting variants. The additional protocol between Spain and the Agency entered into force on 30 April 2004. In addition, Spain provides financial support for the safeguards system through its national programme of support for the IAEA nuclear safeguards.

Spain appeals to all States to participate in the Nuclear Safety Fund, and proposes that a mandatory regime replace the current voluntary regime for State contributions to the Fund. In 2017, Spain, together with Australia and Canada, submitted a working paper entitled "Nuclear security in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons".

Spain signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on 24 September 1996 and ratified it on 31 July 1998. In addition, it participates in numerous diplomatic efforts with third countries to promote the universalization and entry into force of the Treaty. Pending said universalization and entry into force, moratoriums on nuclear tests or any other type of nuclear explosion constitute an important contribution to international peace and security. Spain advocates for nuclear-weapon States to maintain and strengthen the existing commitments to nuclear testing moratoriums.

Spain supports the work and actively backs the activities of the Preparatory Commission in Vienna. It also contributes to the International Monitoring System network by hosting a primary seismic station in Sonseca, which has been in operation since 2002. Spain and the Preparatory Commission have developed cooperation activities through an agreement entered into on 14 April 2000.

Spain is also an active party to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Spain reiterates its concern about the risk posed by the diversion of sensitive materials and technologies to non-State actors for terrorist purposes. Spain firmly supports all initiatives taken in line with Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) to combat the asymmetric proliferation of nuclear weapons, and has developed an action plan for the implementation of the resolution. Spain chaired the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#) as a non-permanent member of the Council in 2015 and 2016. In 2016, Madrid hosted a special meeting of the Committee as part of the comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution, to allow Committee members to discuss the review process and contribute to a final report, and to promote a discussion on the objectives of the review and the role of the resolution in the international non-proliferation architecture. Spain is a member of the Group of Friends of Resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#). Spain supported Security Council resolution [2325 \(2016\)](#), which elaborates on resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), adopted when Spain was a member of the Security Council.

Spain encourages other States to participate in the global fight against nuclear terrorism at the bilateral, regional and international levels. Spain has ratified the 2005 International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Amendment to the IAEA Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities, under which control and monitoring measures are applied to personnel, companies, services and means that carry out activities in nuclear facilities, with respect to private security, in order to ensure their proper compliance with the regulations in force. All of this is pursued through the preparation and implementation of a national plan for the inspection of nuclear facilities.

Spain supports the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, under which it conducted the “Gate to Africa” exercise. The fourth plenary meeting of the Initiative was held in Madrid. Spain chaired the Implementation and Assessment Group from 2010 to 2013, during which time the Initiative’s activities were conducted with determination and in a coordinated manner. In 2013, Spain, together with Morocco, organized the “Remex” exercise, conducted in Madrid, to test the capacities of the two countries and their cooperation arrangements to respond to terrorist attacks involving radioactive substances.

Spain also participates in the Nuclear Security Summits and the Nuclear Security Contact Group.

Spain supports the work of the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction in the context of the Group of Seven, and encourages the continuation of its work, openness to participation and transparency.

Spain welcomes and encourages the commencement of initiatives such as the 2019 verification exercises between France, Germany and Belgium, the Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership and the United Kingdom-Norway Initiative.

Spain supports the signing of all treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. It considers the convening of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction a matter of crucial importance for increasing security and stability in that region. Spain supported the first session of the Conference, held in New York in November 2019, and welcomed the holding of the second session in November 2021.

Spain is a staunch supporter of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. It supported the signing of the EU 3+3 and Iran agreement on 15 July 2015 for the implementation of the Plan, which was endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution [2231 \(2015\)](#). Spain was elected as the facilitator country for the resolution during its membership in the Council in 2015–2016 and, as such, it prioritized the transparent application of the Plan so that all States would have legal certainty in their transactions with Iran. Spain regrets the withdrawal of the United States from the agreement and the progressive releasing of Iran from its obligations. It supports the diplomatic efforts made since April 2021 under the Vienna talks to reverse the situation, and fully endorses the work being carried out on this issue by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

During its term as a member of the Security Council in 2015–2016, Spain also served as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1718 \(2006\)](#) on the sanctions regime applied to the Democratic Republic of North Korea and calls on that country today to comply with its international obligations with respect to non-proliferation and disarmament.

Spain participates actively in initiatives focused on achieving tangible results. It is a prominent member of the Stockholm Initiative on Nuclear Disarmament, which is aimed at giving new impetus to the cause of nuclear disarmament and reaffirming the centrality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty by promoting the success of the tenth Review Conference of the Treaty, scheduled to be held in New York in August 2022. Spain also participates in other initiatives, such as Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament, and calls upon all States to actively participate in forums that facilitate consensus and the adoption of pragmatic, tangible and effective decisions.

Spain is seeking to align the pillar relating to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Goals.

Spain is a party to numerous international multilateral treaties and initiatives to combat the proliferation of specific weapons.

As regards other weapons of mass destruction, and specifically chemical and biological weapons, Spain ratified the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, done at Geneva on 17 June 1925.

Spain is a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction of 10 April 1972, which it ratified in 1979. In November 2021, Spain participated in the Meeting of States Parties in Geneva, where it advocated and supported strengthening the Convention with an effective system for reviewing and following up on country reports. Spain called for mandatory financial contributions with the aim of strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit. It also contributed to the preparatory work for the ninth Review Conference of the Convention, scheduled for December 2022, which will set the priorities for the next five years.

Spain was one of the first countries to sign the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (Chemical Weapons Convention), which it ratified on 3 August

1994. As a member of OPCW, Spain appeals for the avoidance of polarization within the organization and fully supports the work of its Technical Secretariat, which has distinguished itself for its rigour and impartiality. Spain is preparing its contributions to the work of the Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention, which is to be held in 2023 and at which decisions will be taken regarding the priorities for OPCW action in the period following the elimination of the last chemical arsenals, also scheduled for 2023.

Specifically with regard to the means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction, Spain has signed the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and has participated in the joint efforts of the European Union and its member States to promote universalization of the Code.

Spain also participates in many multilateral instruments relating to disarmament and non-proliferation of conventional weapons, which it works to promote.

Spain is a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction of 3 December 1997, which it ratified in 1999. Spain supports the Action Plan 2020–2024, which was adopted at the fourth Review Conference of the Convention, held in November 2019. It is currently a member of the Committee on Cooperative Compliance and gender focal point for the Convention.

The armed forces of Spain have carried out significant work in the area of demining training, mainly through their International Demining Centre, which has helped to train 1,200 operators from 22 countries around the world, but also through their participation in international missions, such as the former International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan and the current United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

In addition, Spain has made contributions in recent years to the voluntary trust fund for assistance in mine action, the trust fund of the Organization of American States and the fund for mine action in the Balkans.

Spain is a party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions of 3 December 2008, which it ratified in 2009. From 2018 to 2020, Spain chaired the victim coordination committee. It is currently a member of the universalization committee.

Spain is a party to the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which it ratified in 1982, and to its five protocols. In 2022, Spain is serving as the President of the sixteenth Annual Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, which is expected to take place by the end of the year. During its tenure, Spain has given new impetus to efforts to secure the universalization of this instrument, which have so far resulted in its ratification by the Republic of the Philippines.

Also within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, Spain contributes to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, which is endeavouring to find a solution to the challenges posed by these types of new technologies that lend themselves to military use.

Spain participates in numerous instruments and forums concerning the arms trade and export controls.

Spain is a party to the 2014 Arms Trade Treaty, which it ratified that same year. At the present time, Spain serves as the facilitator of the sub-working group on the implementation of articles 6 and 7 (prohibitions and assessment), under the working group on the effective implementation of the Treaty.

Spain is also a party to the 2000 United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Convention). In addition, it complies with General Assembly resolution 55/255 of 8 June 2001, in which the Assembly adopted the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, which supplements the Palermo Convention.

Spain also participates in the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Spain is a party to and participates actively in all of the export control regimes: the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Zangger Committee, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Australia Group. It also participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Container Security Initiative and the Megaports Initiative.

A major part of its promotion of multilateralism in the areas of non-proliferation and disarmament takes place within the European Union.

Spain is subject to the European Atomic Energy Community safeguards. Each member State has a domestic agency that manages its economic contributions. Spain hosts Fusion for Energy, the domestic agency of the European Union, based in Barcelona. In addition, the Centre for Energy, Environmental and Technological Research, together with other Spanish institutions and universities, is participating in the development of components and systems for the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor.

Spain is active in the Working Party on Non-Proliferation and Arms Exports of the Council of the European Union, both with regard to non-proliferation and disarmament relating to weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and with regard to the control of exports of conventional arms, as well as in the coordination group of the European Commission on exports of dual-use goods and technologies.

Within the advisory group on nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical defence of the European Commission, a technical group of experts on the detection of nuclear, radiological, biological and chemical threats, in which Spain participates, was established in 2020. The group works to assess the chemical threat from a potential terrorist attack, identifying chemical agents and explosives precursors to be considered, and also to assess the capability of current detection equipment to trace such agents and precursors and the effects that they could cause, depending on the type of scenario.

The Carlos III Institute of Health, through the National Epidemiology Centre and the Biological Alert Laboratory Network (RE-LAB), participates as an affiliated entity in the new “TERROR” Joint Action of the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety of the European Commission, in order to “strengthen the health sector’s preparedness for risks posed by biological and chemical terrorist attacks.

Also in the European sphere, Spain promotes key multilateral instruments on arms control in the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

Spain was initially bound by the confidence-building measures of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act. At the Madrid conference, held between 1980 and 1983, what was referred to as the Madrid Mandate was adopted; it called for the negotiation of confidence- and security-building measures and defined, among other things, the scope of application of such measures. The measures were bolstered by the Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures, which covers the whole of Europe, as well as the contiguous maritime area and airspace. The Vienna Document

is politically binding; it was updated in 2011 with the aim of improving and expanding its application. Spain advocates its modernization.

In October 2021, Spain hosted a two-pronged event under the 2011 Vienna Document in Zaragoza (visit to the air base and to the military installation), attended by delegates from countries participating in the Document, a representative of the Conflict Prevention Centre and representatives of Morocco and Tunisia.

Spain is a party to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which was signed in 1990 and entered into force on 9 November 1992. Since then, more than 60,000 units of conventional weapons limited by the Treaty have been destroyed and more than 4,000 on-site inspections have been carried out. Spain has also signed, ratified and – since its entry into force in 2002 – implemented the Treaty on Open Skies.

Spain regrets that these OSCE mechanisms are facing difficulties owing to the military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine, with the collaboration of Belarus.

As part of its embrace of multilateralism, Spain is participating in the OSCE structured dialogue on current and future challenges and risks, an initiative launched by the OSCE Ministerial Council at its meeting in Hamburg in 2016, which seeks to give a new impetus to arms control and confidence- and security-building measures in Europe. Spain served as Chair of the informal working group on the structured dialogue in 2020 and 2021.

Spain also applies other OSCE instruments, such as the Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security, the Global Exchange of Military Information and the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Spain has also contributed to the implementation of the regional stabilization agreements established in annex 1-B to the Dayton/Paris Agreements for the former Yugoslavia.

In the context of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Spain argues for the usefulness of structured dialogues with partners that are not members of NATO. This applies to the NATO-Ukraine Commission, the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and the Mediterranean Dialogue. In this connection, Spain has organized the Mediterranean Youth Dialogue and has participated in various events in partnership with NATO. The Russian aggression against Ukraine has rendered it impractical to continue with the dialogue that had been conducted until January 2022 through the NATO-Russia Council.

### **III. Disarmament**

Spain supports general and complete disarmament. It participates actively in all international disarmament and non-proliferation forums and agreements relating to both conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction, and fully assumes its political, legal and financial undertakings in that regard.

Spain reiterates its commitment to the Conference on Disarmament, which since 1979 has been the only forum in which the key non-proliferation and disarmament countries have been present on a permanent basis to listen to and address the international community on crucial sectors for world stability. Spain applauds the achievements of the Conference on Disarmament as a forum for the negotiation of the main non-proliferation and disarmament treaties. Spain supports the proposals on a work programme aimed at achieving real progress regarding nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and outer space. At a time when the international environment is marked by geopolitical tensions and doubts about the non-



proliferation system, the resilience of the Conference on Disarmament, in which States jointly assume responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, is all more the important.

Spain reiterates its goal of an early conclusion to the negotiation, in the Conference on Disarmament, of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, in accordance with the mandate set out in document [CD/1299](#). Pending the conclusion of such an agreement, which is still an inadequate measure, Spain appreciates the moratoriums on the production of fissile material unilaterally declared by the States that possess nuclear weapons or nuclear technology in general.

As a demonstration of its commitment to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, Spain is serving in 2022 as coordinator of subsidiary body 2, on the prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters, as mandated by decision [CD/2229](#).

Disarmament and arms limitation at the bilateral level are important contributions to international peace and security. Spain is concerned at the deterioration of the agreements reached between Russia and the United States to control and reduce their nuclear arsenals, including the abandonment of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The extension of the New START Treaty in February 2021 and the start of talks on strategic stability between the two powers for a new framework for the control of nuclear weapons were encouraging steps. However, the suspension of these talks following the military aggression of Russia against Ukraine, and certain public statements that seem to point to a lowering of the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, pose a worrisome scenario. Further difficulties are created by the emergence of equipment and technologies, such as new highly manoeuvrable hypersonic missiles or ever-more autonomous defence systems, which increase the risk of escalation.

Spain calls for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in non-proliferation and disarmament. It has assumed the role of co-leader in this respect in the disarmament agenda of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. To that end, a world-pioneering seminar on gender and disarmament was held in Spain in July 2019, with the participation of the former President of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference and current Director General of IAEA, Rafael Grossi. Spain promotes the participation of women in diplomatic efforts relating to non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as of women scientists in forums. Spain takes care to recognize the distinctive contribution and differentiated impact of women and girls in non-proliferation and disarmament. Spain also upholds the importance of the link between education and disarmament, and calls for recognition of the role of young people in this field. These are areas – gender and youth – that Spain promotes, for example, as part of the aforementioned Stockholm Initiative on Nuclear Disarmament.

## Türkiye

[Original: English]  
[26 May 2022]

The General Assembly, in its resolution [76/65](#), encouraged all of the Mediterranean countries to work together based on a spirit of multilateral partnership in order to overcome challenges in the region towards the general objective of turning the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchanges and cooperation, guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity. Türkiye, having one of the longest coasts in the Mediterranean Sea and being one of the co-sponsors of resolution [76/65](#), would

like to see the Eastern Mediterranean as a region of cooperation and has always been in favour of dialogue.

For achieving this goal, Türkiye acknowledges the importance of cooperation among the States in the region on the basis of equal rights. Today the Mediterranean Sea is a region of potential conflict rather than cooperation due to continuous geopolitical and geoeconomic competition among various actors. Unfortunately, the unilateral actions of certain countries are worsening the situation.

### **International cooperation**

Türkiye attaches particular importance to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, as they contribute to stability. Given the threats posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including their acquisition by terrorists, these efforts are critical enablers of not only regional but also global peace and security. Türkiye desires to see all countries unanimously share the goals of disarmament and non-proliferation, and collectively work towards a safer and more stable environment in the Mediterranean region. To this end, Türkiye is party to the major international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and regimes and supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Being located at the intersection of major trade routes, Türkiye pays particular attention to the prevention of illicit arms transfers. To this end, Türkiye is also party to all export control regimes for conventional weapons and dual-use equipment and technologies, namely the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Zangger Committee, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Australia Group.

As a participating State of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and a country in the Eastern Mediterranean region, Türkiye highly values the OSCE Mediterranean Partners for Cooperation group. Türkiye keeps Mediterranean-related issues high on the agenda of OSCE and supports increasing dialogue with its Mediterranean partners in the relevant OSCE platforms.

In addition, as a North Atlantic Treaty Organization member, Türkiye values the alliance's Mediterranean Dialogue, as it shares the Dialogue's aim "to contribute towards regional security and stability through stronger practical cooperation, including by enhancing the existing political dialogue, achieving interoperability, developing defence reform and contributing to the fight against terrorism".

As a littoral State, Türkiye has a keen interest in and a responsibility for supporting efforts to turn the Mediterranean into an area of peace, democracy and prosperity, and is actively supporting the strengthening of cooperation in the Mediterranean. As a candidate country to the European Union, Türkiye is also a member of and a contributor to the work of the Union for the Mediterranean and the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures, which bring countries in the region together.

### **Middle East**

Türkiye considers that the international community should accelerate its efforts towards finding a just, lasting and comprehensive solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on a two-State solution and established United Nations parameters in order to prevent a recurrence of escalation, violence and suffering in the Middle East.

## **North Africa**

Overall stability in North Africa is still fragile owing to the ongoing political tensions since 2011 and economic challenges which were exacerbated due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Economic and social indicators have not improved since then.

In the face of this unpromising scene, it is incumbent upon the international community to act in close coordination to consolidate stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean basin.

Any instability in the region could have adverse spillover effects in the Sahel and the greater African continent in a wide range of areas, including terrorism, irregular migration, and food and energy security. With this understanding, Türkiye aims to contribute to the stability and prosperity of the wider region and supports international efforts in this regard.

Libya constitutes a recent case in point. So far, the efforts of Türkiye have been instrumental in establishing the ceasefire, paving the way for the Berlin process, resuming the political process and putting the country on its path towards elections.

The holding of free and fair nationwide elections on a consensual constitutional basis will be crucial. To this end, Türkiye supports the efforts undertaken by Libyan institutions under United Nations auspices. Türkiye also continues to contribute to the Libyan-led and Libyan-owned political process and to reconciliation efforts.

It is equally important to help Libya in its capacity-building endeavours and establish a fully fledged security architecture.

## **Cyprus issue**

The Cyprus issue began in 1963 when the Greek Cypriots expelled the Turkish Cypriots from the partnership State organs and institutions, as well as from their homes, in violation of the treaties of 1960 and all human rights norms. That is to say, the Republic of Cyprus, which was established in 1960, ceased to exist in 1963 and, since then, there has been no single authority that represents the whole island. Today, it is a fact that there are two States and two peoples on the island.

Given this background, Türkiye believes that a just, lasting, sustainable and mutually acceptable settlement to the Cyprus issue on the basis of the realities on the island would contribute to strengthening stability and security in the Mediterranean region. In this sense, Türkiye maintains that only a negotiated settlement based on dialogue and diplomacy can be sustainable.

Türkiye is firmly convinced that persistent ignorance of the legitimate rights and aspirations of the Turkish Cypriots will perpetuate instability and tension in the Mediterranean region. Türkiye therefore underlines the urgent need for the reaffirmation of the inherent sovereign equality and equal international status of the Turkish Cypriot people.

## **Hydrocarbon resources**

The discovery of hydrocarbon resources has exacerbated the situation in the Mediterranean. However, Türkiye believes that the hydrocarbon resources can also provide incentives for cooperation among littoral States.

## **Eastern Mediterranean policy**

Türkiye's policy towards the issues in the Eastern Mediterranean has two dimensions.

The first dimension is related to the maritime boundary delimitation in the Eastern Mediterranean. According to international law, coastal States should enter into negotiations in order to reach an agreement on maritime boundaries. This agreement should be based on the principle of equal and just treatment of each party. In line with that, Türkiye has always been ready to enter into negotiations for the delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas based on international law and the principle of equity with all coastal States in the Eastern Mediterranean with which it has diplomatic relations.

The second dimension of the Eastern Mediterranean policy of Türkiye concerns the protection of the rights of the Turkish Cypriots with regard to offshore resources. The Turkish Cypriots, as co-owners of the island, have equal rights along with the Greek Cypriots over the offshore resources. This is also an established principle agreed by the decades-long United Nations process. It is of utmost necessity to reach an understanding that could establish an equitable revenue-sharing mechanism between the two peoples for the hydrocarbon resources around the island of Cyprus.

Türkiye emphasizes that it stands ready to give its full support to ensure a just, equitable and peaceful solution to all pending issues, including the equitable delimitation of maritime jurisdiction areas with all relevant coastal States in accordance with international law, in order to further contribute to the stability and prosperity of the entire Mediterranean basin. Türkiye believes that building peace and stability in the Mediterranean will be possible only through dialogue and cooperation.

To this end, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan called for a regional conference on the Eastern Mediterranean in 2020. The Conference could be an opportunity to generate an inclusive cooperation mechanism with the participation of all littoral States. Türkiye expects all parties in the Eastern Mediterranean to support this constructive and innovative proposal.

### **Humanitarian crisis**

The humanitarian crisis in Syria, in particular in the north-west, has become protracted and humanitarian needs have increased. The population in north-west Syria is 4.4 million, of which 2.8 million are internally displaced persons. COVID-19 has been compounding an already dire humanitarian situation.

In that regard, addressing the needs of these people in an uninterrupted and sustainable manner is of vital importance for the security of the wider Mediterranean region. Türkiye, in cooperation with the United Nations cross-border mechanism, provides vital aid to north-west Syria, thus avoiding further displacement, including to the countries in the Mediterranean basin.

As the country hosting the largest number of refugees in the world for eight years, Türkiye continues to support 4 million people under its protection. Türkiye sees it as a moral responsibility to save the lives of migrants and asylum-seekers.

Several reports of respectable international organizations pointed out severe human rights violations at the borders, including ill-treatment, verbal and physical abuse, confiscation of personal belongings and pushbacks, and the involvement of border management authorities in these violations. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration also published official statements urging the investigation of such reports of pushbacks and the end of this practice. International law should be upheld while managing external borders.

### III. Reply received from European Union

[Original: English]

[31 May 2022]

The strengthening of security and internal regional cooperation in the Mediterranean, and in the broader Middle East, remains high on the European agenda. A democratic, more stable, greener and more prosperous southern neighbourhood is a strategic priority for the European Union. Further to the adoption on 9 February 2021 of the new agenda for the Mediterranean, which, inter alia, proposes to develop further the partnership of the European Union on security matters with its neighbouring countries, the European Union has moved ahead with its implementation in all priority domains.

Important efforts have been put in place by the European Union during the past year to enhance regional cooperation in the Mediterranean through reinforced support and cooperation with the Union for the Mediterranean, the League of Arab States (LAS), the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. This enhanced commitment is exemplified by the creation within the Middle East and North Africa Department of the European External Action Service of a dedicated Regional Affairs Division.

The Union for the Mediterranean continued to contribute to promoting a more peaceful, secure, green, prosperous and inclusive Mediterranean region by creating, through dialogue and cooperation, a political environment that can mitigate the tensions affecting its members. Due to the pandemic, engagement with LAS was limited to an informal stocktaking meeting of senior officials in December 2021, which prepared for important meetings that took place in June 2022 in Cairo.

The European Union seeks to boost the partnership with the Gulf Cooperation Council and its members following the Ula Declaration that ended the so-called Gulf “internal rift”. Resuming engagement, the twenty-sixth European Union-Gulf Cooperation Council Joint Council provided the framework for exchanges on regional security and endorsed a five-year joint cooperation programme. In May 2022, the European Union adopted a joint communication on a partnership with the Gulf.

The European Union is keen to engage with southern neighbourhood partners in multilateral forums, notably on climate, peace and security, on global issues on the basis of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, and on strengthening rules-based trade, the rule of law, good governance and respect for human rights and international law. As participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), European Union member States continue to foster cooperation and dialogue on wider security issues through the OSCE Mediterranean Partnership.

In implementing the agenda for the Mediterranean, the European Union draws on its full toolbox. The joint communication on a renewed partnership and the joint documents are the basis for the multi-annual programming, guiding European Union financial assistance for the period 2021–2027. Multi-annual indicative programmes are expected to be in place for all southern partners in the course of 2022. Actions for the Economic and Investment Plan are under way. Under the new European Union Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, up to €7 billion for the period 2021–2027 would be allocated, potentially mobilizing up to €30 billion in private and public investment in the region. Through the Global Gateway, its new connectivity strategy, the European Union is stepping up its help to partners meet their infrastructure needs.

Joint efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts are paramount priorities. The European Union is a main provider of humanitarian and development assistance in the Mediterranean region and is able to deploy a wide range of instruments in a triple nexus humanitarian-development-peace approach. It is deploying military and civilian Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations, mediation and stabilization actions, and restrictive measures.

The European Union continues to call for a political solution to the Syria conflict in line with Security Council resolution [2254 \(2015\)](#). The European Union remains the largest donor for the Syrian crisis, with €3.7 billion in total for 2021 and beyond. The European Union supports a sustainable solution for the Syrian refugees, which can only be based on their voluntary, safe and dignified return to their places of origin when conditions on the ground as defined by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) allow this.

European Union support for the Sahel region is critical to stability in the Mediterranean. Particular support has been awarded to the Group of Five for the Sahel coalition, created in 2014, and its joint force, created in 2017. The European Union presence includes several military and civilian Common Security and Defence Policy missions in the region.

The European Union has joined LAS, the United Nations and the African Union to form the Libya Quartet, with the objective of contributing to the efforts of finding a solution to the crisis.

In the agenda for the Mediterranean, the European Union also noted the need to renew efforts to reach a settlement in the Middle East peace process. The European Union seeks to encourage efforts to enhance the prospects for a negotiated two-State solution based on the internationally agreed parameters, as well as regional peace and security, including by building upon the recent establishment of diplomatic relations between Israel and a number of Arab countries.

Part of European Union support to the region on security addressed the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks in the region. The European Union showed flexibility by responding at short notice to challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in several countries. The Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area funds projects for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. European Union chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear centres of excellence contribute to these tasks, including in Morocco and Algeria.

The European Union continued to cooperate with its southern partners on tackling terrorism and preventing radicalization leading to violent extremism by supporting institutional capacity-building and the development of relevant legislation. The work of counter-terrorism and security experts continues within European Union delegations.

Migration continues to be a priority for the European Union and its partners. Work is ongoing to provide lifesaving support to millions of refugees and displaced persons, tackle the root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, protect European Union external borders and further strengthen cooperation with international partners. Initiatives include the enlargement of the competencies of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). The European Union asylum management system has been upgraded with a reinforced Eurodac system that allows for the storage of biometric data. Cooperation among security forces includes joint exercises such as the 2020 European Union Common Information Sharing Environment and the Early Warning for Increased Situational Awareness project, specifically within maritime and border cooperation, as well as the Marine-Earth

Observation programme, which applies data from the Copernicus programme to maritime security.

The European Union supports United Nations activities in this region, through funding and technical cooperation. This applies specifically to UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration, as well as in the framework of the African Union-European Union-United Nations task force on Libya.

The Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations that are active along the main migratory routes are enhancing capacity in the region. The European Union military operation in the Mediterranean was adopted in 2020 as the successor operation to the European Union military operation in the Southern Central Mediterranean (2015–2020), with an adjusted primary focus on the implementation of the United Nations arms embargo pursuant to Security Council resolution [1970 \(2011\)](#) and [2292 \(2016\)](#) and of United Nations measures against illicit exports of petroleum from Libya and capacity-building and training of the Libyan coast guard and navy. The European Union Integrated Border Management Assistance Mission in Libya supports the Libyan authorities in disrupting organized criminal networks involved in the smuggling of migrants, human trafficking and terrorism.

The European Union expresses concern about the instrumentalization by third parties of the migrant pressure along the Eastern Mediterranean migration route, as well as the spread of disinformation and fake news regarding the plight of people using that route. In this respect, it is of the utmost importance to enhance cooperation and the ability of partners to address these challenges.

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