



# General Assembly

*Official Records*

## Disarmament Commission

**380<sup>th</sup>** meeting

 Tuesday, 5 April 2022, 3 p.m.  
 New York

*Chair:* Mr. Mabhongo ..... (South Africa)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

### General exchange of views (*continued*)

**The Chairman:** I wish to remind delegations that we will follow the established format for the length of statements: 13 minutes for delegations speaking on behalf of groups and eight minutes for delegations making statements in their national capacity.

**Mr. Roethlin** (Austria): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Ambassador, as well as the other Bureau members and the Chairs of the Working Groups, on your appointment and your readiness to guide the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) through its first substantive session in four years. You can count on our full support.

Austria welcomes the resumption of the Commission's formal work. That is overdue and should serve as an important reminder that multilateral disarmament processes are key to the maintenance of the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture as we know it. We will engage constructively and hope that the Commission will be able to present recommendations to the General Assembly, as it last did in 2017.

Austria aligns itself fully with the statement delivered earlier today on behalf of the European Union (see A/CN.10/PV.379). I wish to add some points in my national capacity.

Starting with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, we find ourselves in times of

extreme tensions and worrying trends, most recently surrounding Russia's aggression against Ukraine, where President Putin not only heightened the status of readiness of his nuclear forces but also issued thinly veiled threats about the potential use of nuclear weapons, both of which are completely unacceptable. The threat of use of nuclear weapons not only violates a core principle of the Charter of the United Nations but also exacerbates tensions and increases the risk of miscalculation, which is why we condemn such actions under all circumstances. Austria and 12 other countries did so in a statement issued on 1 March.

That threat by President Putin squarely contradicts the Russian reaffirmation that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, in the framework of the statement issued by the Permanent Five this January.

On this occasion, let me repeat our condemnation in the strongest terms of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Russia must immediately cease its use of force against Ukraine, fully respect its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders, and withdraw its military forces from the territory of Ukraine. We are appalled at the recently disseminated pictures of atrocities in Bucha and other Ukrainian cities; those crimes need to be investigated and those responsible held to account.

The takeaway of that unprovoked, unjustified war cannot be that nuclear weapons are necessary for security; that would be a devastating blow to the non-proliferation regime as we know it. Rather, the takeaway must be that nuclear weapons remain an

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unacceptable threat to humankind and need to be eliminated. As we have said on numerous occasions, progress and cooperation on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are most urgent when tensions are high. In that vein, we hope that such progress can be achieved not only here in the UNDC but in various other forums in the upcoming months.

While the coronavirus disease pandemic has upended much of our disarmament schedules, it has not been able to stop the growing number of States that have signed and ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). At our last substantive session, in 2018, the TPNW had just received its first ratifications, but, encouragingly, the pace of signatures and ratifications has steadily improved and kept pace in the years that followed, culminating in the Treaty's entry into force in January 2021. Currently, 60 States parties send a strong message about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the need to eliminate them.

We continue to call on all States to sign and ratify the TPNW and are honoured to hold the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna in June this year. We invite all States to join that meeting, which will advance and further strengthen our calls for nuclear disarmament. As we have heard from various delegations during this session of the UNDC, the TPNW complements the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which remains the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. After several postponements due to the pandemic, we hope that nothing will stand in the way of the full holding of the overdue Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, scheduled for August. We thank the President-designate for his work to date and hope that the Conference will not only take stock of the developments since the last Review Conference but also build on past commitments to further strengthen its essential role in preventing nuclear proliferation, facilitating the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and paving the way to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Regarding outer space, we remain committed to the use of outer space for peaceful purposes and remain convinced that the prevention of an arms race in outer space is essential to international security. However, in recent years we have increasingly witnessed behaviour inconsistent with such peaceful use. It is

thus increasingly important to reduce space threats and to define norms of responsible State behaviour in outer space, which is why we have been a co-sponsor of the corresponding General Assembly initiative led by the United Kingdom at past sessions of the First Committee, including the establishment of an open-ended working group. We therefore look forward to the commencement of that group's work in early May and hope that it will play an important role in shaping and defining such norms of responsible State behaviour.

In addition, transparency and confidence-building measures can help reduce miscalculations and misunderstandings about outer space activities. In that regard, we look forward to discussions in Working Group 2, scheduled to commence shortly.

At the same time, confidence is tough to gain but easily lost, and, our concerns on substance notwithstanding, we reiterate that Russia's aggression is making it very hard to place faith in legally binding instruments when one of the States parties that has been proposing them has been blatantly violating legally binding commitments in other areas, most notably in Ukraine.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the observer of the State of Palestine.

**Ms. Sayej (Palestine):** I deliver this statement on behalf of Ambassador Riyad Mansour.

"Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and South Africa on your election as the Chair of this session. As you steer the course of our work during these incredibly challenging times, we are confident that your experience will lead to much-needed constructive and focused deliberations. Be assured of Palestine's full support.

"The State of Palestine aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/CN.10/PV.377).

"This session of the Disarmament Commission is particularly important, as are the putative recommendations on nuclear disarmament and outer space. This session is a thin line between the progress and regress of the United Nations disarmament machinery. The ever-rising tensions serve as clarion calls to the international community to revitalize reliable multilateral disarmament

efforts and bring them to the forefront of the United Nations. This year we have the opportunity to do so in this Disarmament Commission session, in the historic first meeting of States parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and in the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

“We call for the adoption of unambiguous and specific recommendations on nuclear disarmament, in a manner that complements non-proliferation and advances the complete and definitive elimination of nuclear weapons, as the failure to implement the former will continue to compromise the achievement of the latter.

“In that connection, the relevant legal obligations and resolutions must be upheld without further delay, including the resolution adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, calling on States to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons. Indeed, the establishment of such a zone is an integral part of the package that led to the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. A treaty for the Middle East zone would serve as a necessary shield for our region. Its establishment is a shared undertaking by all and is an obligation on all in our region.

“Yet Israel continues to selfishly defy both international law and regional and international will, as well as undermine regional and international security. It has illegally developed nuclear weapons, refused to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty and continues to actively obstruct the prospect of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons. That undertaking, however, remains open to all, without exception. Nobody was excluded, but one party has decided to exclude itself.

“On that premise, we welcome the successful convening of the first and second sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, under the presidencies of Jordan and Kuwait, respectively. We endorse the outcomes, including the adoption of rules of procedure and the establishment of an informal working committee by consensus.

“Guided by our commitment to peace in our region and in all regions, the State of Palestine will

continue to engage constructively to bring us closer to our overarching goal — a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons.

“As a common space of humankind, the protection of outer space is necessary for the benefit of all — not the few. It must remain conflict-free. In the spirit of inclusiveness, universality, non-discrimination and consensus, all activities in outer space must be addressed here, in this room and in this building.

“Our deliberations in the coming days should be based on our commitment to the principles of multilateralism, non-discrimination and full respect for the rule of law at the international level, with the aim of achieving full and complete disarmament and elimination of nuclear weapons.

“Let me conclude by saying that we have a duty and an obligation to our common prosperity and humanity. There is no magic formula to disarmament. It is a process we all set to define our world — not by our capacity to destroy but by our capacity to create and prosper.”

**The Chair:** Before giving the floor to speakers in exercise of the right of reply, may I remind delegations that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention.

**Mr. Kim In Chol** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): My delegation takes the floor to exercise its right of reply in response to the statements made by the representatives of South Korea and Australia (see A/CN.10/PV.379).

First, we strongly condemn the reckless and provocative rhetoric of the representative of South Korea with regard to our top leadership. We will never tolerate attempts to tarnish the dignity of our top leadership and will apply all possible means to thwart such attempts. The representative of South Korea dangerously sought to turn the Disarmament Commission into an arena of fratricidal strife. It calls into question his integrity and moral quality. South Korea must be careful with its words. South Korea must bear in mind that such reckless rhetoric will entail irreversible and disastrous consequences.

In that context, my delegation feels compelled to enlighten the Commission on related developments on the Korean peninsula. Quite recently, South Korea,

backed by the United States, has made a strong push to upgrade its combat capabilities, including by introducing a large number of cutting-edge weapons of various kinds, such as stealth Joint Strike Fighters and high-altitude unmanned reconnaissance aircraft. South Korea is hell-bent on increasing its military expenditures under the so-called righteous excuse of coping with what they have unilaterally defined as threats. Their hypocritical attitude continues to damage inter-Korean relations, and their ongoing dangerous attempts to strengthen their military capabilities are rupturing the military equilibrium in the region of the Korean peninsula and aggravating military instability and danger. All sorts of military drills and arms build-up, under the pretext of containing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, have become conspicuous in South Korea, and their sinister remarks and behaviours, which are getting on our nerves, have been heard from it more often than not.

It is important for South Korean authorities to change their confrontational attitude and hostility towards our Republic, maintain the stance of national independence through real actions and implement in good faith the Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula.

In the meantime, we would like to draw the Commission's attention to the recent reckless rhetoric of a South Korean military chief on a pre-emptive strike on our army's striking ability. The South Korean military, which has labelled us an enemy, talked about a possibility of mounting a pre-emptive strike, although under a conditional premise. Such nonsense, in itself, is a very dangerous and nasty expression. If no one provokes us, then we will never strike first.

As declared clearly on several occasions, our war-deterrent force is aimed at preventing the possible outbreak of war itself and preserving peace and security on the Korean peninsula and beyond. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains committed to fulfilling its responsibility and role in the efforts for preserving peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, as it has done in the past.

The establishment of the trilateral pact among Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States subjected Australia to international denunciation and rejection. It is quite preposterous that Australia, oblivious of its miserable situation, picks on our State and its efforts to increase self-defence capabilities,

which is a legitimate exercise of its sovereignty. Our State's self-defence measures to increase our national defence capabilities are quite natural and righteous moves to safeguard the sovereignty and development of the country and to firmly ensure regional peace and security so as to cope with hostile forces in their vicious manoeuvres against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

However, Australia is taking the lead in further escalating tension on the Korean peninsula by standing at the forefront of implementing the hostile policy of the United States of America against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In recent years alone, Australia, under the pretext of watching the implementation of the so-called sanctions resolutions, has been hell-bent on promoting a pressure campaign against my country by deploying maritime patrol aircraft and war ships, one after another, around the Korean peninsula and by widely conducting Exercise Cope North — a combined air force training exercise, together with the United States and Japan, on Guam and the Mariana Islands in the Pacific Ocean.

Meanwhile, Australia allows the United States to deploy strategic bombers in its country in return for the help of the United States to develop a long-range precision-strike weapon system. It also broadly laid bare its intention to lease nuclear-powered submarines from the United States until it finishes building its own submarines, and even to purchase submarine-launched Tomahawk cruise missiles from the United States. The open perpetration of arms-expansion by Australia, under the protection of the United States and the United Kingdom, are extremely dangerous acts that threaten regional peace and security.

Australia should not misjudge our determination and will to build our war deterrence at the highest level in order to safeguard the country's sovereignty and right to development in today's world, where the mode of existence based on the law of the jungle prevails. Furthermore, Australia should abandon its inveterate vice of blindly following the United States in its hostile moves against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mrs. Narayanan Nair (India):** I take the floor to exercise India's right of reply in response to the continued abuse of the sanctity of multilateral forums by Pakistan.



Yet again, we heard the representative of that country spew rabid falsehoods that are completely irrelevant to the agenda under discussion. But that is neither surprising nor new. Pakistan suffers from an obsessive compulsion — to abuse multilateral forums, to peddle untruths and shamelessly recycle unsubstantiated allegations against India. This deserves collective contempt.

I do not intend to dignify the litany of lies with a response and waste the precious time of the Disarmament Commission. However, the record has to be set straight.

With regard to the reference made to the issue of the accidental firing of a missile, I wish to inform colleagues of India's Defence Minister's statement on the matter. He notes that, on 9 March 2022,

“during routine maintenance and inspection, a missile was accidentally released. It was later learned that the missile had landed inside the territory of Pakistan. While this incident is regretted, we are relieved that nobody was hurt due to the accident. The Government of India has taken serious note of the incident, and a formal high-level inquiry has been ordered.”

He goes on to say:

“a review of the standard operating procedures for operations, maintenance and inspections is being conducted in the wake of this incident. We attach the highest priority to the safety and security of our weapon systems ... our safety procedures and protocols are of the highest order and are reviewed from time to time.”

Today Pakistan made a number of futile and unsubstantiated allegations against India, including in relation to the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. Those do not merit a response, as they pertain to matters internal to India. Let me reiterate here that the entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir will always be an inalienable part of India. That includes the areas that are under the illegal occupation of Pakistan. We call upon Pakistan to immediately vacate all areas under its illegal occupation. Pakistan's baseless accusations are indeed rich coming from a nation that is encouraging sectarian violence against Muslims and suppresses the rights of minorities.

We expect nothing new from this delegation that harbours a deep sense of insecurity and orchestrated

hatred for India, our pluralistic democracy and the values that my country stands for. However, despite its hopeless efforts, the world is able to see through its deceit and doublespeak. It is time to hold Pakistan to account and not let it abuse United Nations platforms for spreading disinformation and hate and incite violence.

India's security concerns are not confined to a region. My country has therefore always approached these issues in a global context. The Disarmament Commission has a focused agenda dealing with global issues relating to disarmament and international security. As it is, we are meeting after a three-year gap. This is not a forum to address bilateral or regional issues. This Commission should not only categorically reject Pakistan's designs, but collectively denounce Pakistan for its repeated efforts to politicize its work and hijack its mandate.

Going by its past practice and compulsive obsession with India, Pakistan may exercise its right of reply and continue its malicious false propaganda against my country. But I shall refrain from responding to it out of respect for the work of the Commission under the Chair's able leadership and guidance.

**Ms. Shestopalova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to exercise the right of reply in response to accusations made by certain delegations that Russia has allegedly violated the Budapest Memorandum. Any accusation that Russia has violated its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum, with regard to the security guarantees related to Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, distort the content and meaning of the document and are nothing but elements of anti-Russian propaganda.

Ukraine's loss of its territorial integrity was a result of internal centripetal processes provoked by the external destabilizing influence of the West. Russia and its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum have nothing to do with that. The provisions of the Memorandum do not cover the circumstances that resulted from the acts of the internal political or socioeconomic factors. Neither in Budapest in 1994 nor thereafter did Russia undertake the commitment to acknowledge and accept coup d'états and compel parts of Ukraine to remain as part of the State, against the will of the people themselves.

Under the Memorandum, among other things, Russia confirmed, vis-à-vis Ukraine, our obligation

not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States, also taking into account the standard technical reservations, which are usual in this case. That obligation has been strictly observed and continues to be fully respected.

In addition, we must note that the representatives of a number of delegations have voiced provocative statements about the allegedly possible use by Russia, in the course of the special military operation in Ukraine, of nuclear weapons. Such falsehoods have no rational underpinnings. They are aimed at ratcheting up anti-Russian hysteria and assume that the public will not be aware of the basics of Russian policy as we conduct it in the area of security and defence. Our policy is strictly and exclusively defensive in nature.

In line with the military doctrine of my country, the use of nuclear weapons can occur only as a reaction to the use of nuclear weapons or other of mass destruction against it and/or its allies, or in the case of aggression against my country with the use of conventional weapons and when what is being threatened is the very existence of the State. Such criteria cannot in any way be used in the scenario that we now see unfolding in Ukraine.

I will now say a few words about the accusations launched by a number of Western delegations with regard to the military operation in Ukraine. The reasons that we began the special military operation in Ukraine are well known. Since 2014, the Kyiv regime has been conducting massive aggression against the peaceful citizens of Donbas, who refused to accept and acknowledge the coup d'état in the country. Our constant appeals to pay attention to the overwhelming presence of Nazis in the Government of Ukraine to the socioeconomic blockade and the murders of peaceful citizens in the south-eastern part of the country have been consistently ignored by Western States.

On the contrary, instead of compelling Kyiv to stop its war against the people in the south-east, throughout all these years the United States and other Western States have pumped Ukraine full of weapons and ammunition and conducted large-scale joint military exercises, constantly training the Ukrainian military in its areas of military deployment. From 2014 until the end of 2021, the United States alone provided military assistance to Ukraine to the tune of \$2.7 billion. Arms and weaponry were also provided by the United

Kingdom, Canada, Poland, Turkey, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and other States members of NATO.

Furthermore, on 27 February, the European Union (EU) decided to start supplying lethal weaponry to Ukraine. Therefore, States members of the EU have truly shown what underlies the rule of law in Europe by ignoring all eight criteria of the Council of the European Union Common Position of 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment. That document bans the supply from the European Union of weapons and military equipment in a number of situations.

Let me list some of those situations: non-compliance with human rights, including the risk of the use of the weapons supplied for internal repression activities — as we know, what Kyiv was doing in Donbas was genocide; armed conflict in the country of destination and the risk of escalation as a result of weapon supplies; and the threats to regional peace, security and stability, including the possibility of an armed conflict with a third country. It is clear that those criteria, which ban the provision of weapon supplies, fully cover the current situation.

From the very beginning of 2022, we have been witnessing a serious escalation of the situation along the entire contact line in Donbas. We received compelling evidence of the fact that Ukraine was preparing a full-scale invasion of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics so as to eliminate them. Russia recognized the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics as sovereign and independent States.

On 24 February, the President of the Russian Federation, Mr. Vladimir V. Putin, at the request of the heads of the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics and in line with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of the treaties that I just mentioned, took the decision to conduct a special military operation. At the same time, for its part, the Kyiv regime continues to show indifference to the lives of its nationals, while continuing to intentionally shell peaceful cities and civilian infrastructure.

On 14 March, using the Tochka-U missile, the armed forces of Ukraine struck the centre of Donetsk with cluster munitions. That resulted in dozens of victims.

In order to increase the number of victims of that attack, the day before the Ukrainians disseminated misinformation, through their social networks, in

order to gather the mothers of Donetsk army personnel in the place where the strike was to take place. The armed Ukrainian nationalists are deploying heavy weaponry in residential areas and are using civilians as human shields.

Under such conditions, Kyiv is using civilians as hostages, holding people in blocked residential areas. Russia is opening humanitarian corridors for them daily, while the Ukrainian nationalists forbid people to move in the direction of Russia at the threat of executing them. They demand that they evacuate only towards the west.

To date, we have received 3 million requests from Ukrainians for assistance to evacuate. In total, as of 28 March, since the beginning of the operation almost 600,000 people have been evacuated to our country from Ukraine and the Donetsk and Luhansk People's Republics.

At present, the operation is continuing according to plan. The goals remain unchanged. They include the demilitarization and de-Nazification of Ukraine, protecting the peaceful people in Donbas from genocide and eliminating the threats to Russia's security originating from Ukrainian territory. All those goals will be attained.

**Mr. Alateek** (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank the Chair for having given me the floor in exercise of my right of reply to Iran's statement. This morning, we spoke in our national statement about our position vis-à-vis a number of disarmament issues, particularly in the Middle East region, including Iran's nuclear dossier and Iran's ballistic missile programme (see A/CN.10/PV.379). However, in her statement, the representative of Iran considered that the issues we talked about were fake allegations and accusations.

We would like to clarify that Iran continues to support the Houthi terrorist militias in Yemen, which have targeted vital and oil facilities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia with more than 300 ballistic missiles and 400 drones. The latest such attack was the terrorist aggression against oil facilities in the cities of Jeddah and Jazan on 25 March. That aggression is considered an attack on the global oil supply and a stark violation by Iran of international law, as well as aggression against international peace and security. In addition, it is an explicit challenge to resolutions 2140 (2014), 2216 (2015) and 2624 (2022).

We emphasize calling on Iran to act as a responsible State, stop interfering in the affairs of the region and cease supporting terrorism. We also emphasize the importance of the international community seriously addressing Iran's nuclear programme and its ballistic missile programme.

**Ms. Alldridge** (United Kingdom): I take the floor to reply to the statement of the Ukrainian representative in which he commented on the United Kingdom's decision to increase its nuclear weapon stockpile ceiling in the United Kingdom's recent Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Foreign and Development Policy.

We have consistently stated that we will keep our nuclear posture under constant review, in the light of the international security environment, and that we will maintain the minimum destructive power needed to guarantee that the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent remains credible against the full range of nuclear threats. The United Kingdom regrets that the significantly deteriorated security environment has necessitated that change. We have been clear that that is a maximum, not a target, and neither is it our current stockpile number. It will be kept under review.

I would add that the United Kingdom possesses the smallest stockpile of the five nuclear-weapon States recognized under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and is the only one to operate a single delivery system.

The United Kingdom also continues to be a strong champion of the importance of transparency and regularly makes a concerted effort to increase its transparency through public statements, such as the Integrated Review, and through our work within the P5 Process. We remain firmly committed to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons, and I hope that all States will join us in creating the environment that will make further progress on nuclear disarmament possible.

**Ms. Fisher** (United States of America): I regret taking the floor to exercise the right of reply to the statement delivered by the representatives, first, of Iran (see A/CN.10/PV.379) and, then, of the Russian Federation (see A/CN.10/PV.378).

In response to Iran's allegations that the United States continues to fund all the nuclear weapons that the Trump Administration was funding, that is not correct. The United States already cancelled the sea-launched

cruise missile programme, and we already announced that we were retiring the B83-1.

Regarding the Russian Federation's accusations against the United States, yesterday I went through a more detailed reply (see A/CN.10/PV.378). Today I will let the representatives here judge for themselves what those accusations are in addition to being an attempt to divert attention away from the atrocities that Russia is committing in Ukraine.

Let me instead take this opportunity to again note that President Putin is on the wrong side of history with Russia's unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. As Secretary Blinken noted, Russian strikes are hitting schools, hospitals and residences. They are destroying critical infrastructure, which supplies drinking water, electricity and gas to keep innocents from freezing to death. Buses, cars, ambulances and even part of the Holocaust museum have been hit. The human costs of the Kremlin's unwarranted war on Ukraine are already staggering. The United Nations has confirmed that more than 1,000 civilians have been killed and many more have been wounded. The actual numbers are likely much higher.

Based on the information currently available, we have assessed that members of Russia's forces have committed war crimes in Ukraine. For the Ukrainian people, two things are increasingly clear, that is, that the Ukrainian people are not going to give up and, secondly, that this is Putin's war and many of the Russians themselves, including Russian soldiers, do not fully support it. In the end, Russia will be weaker, not stronger, for launching this war.

The United States again calls on Russia to stop spreading misinformation in an attempt to divert our collective horror at what it is doing to the people of Ukraine. The United States also again calls on Russia to immediately halt its military attacks on Ukraine, return its troops and equipment to Russia and cease all further aggression against Ukraine.

**Mr. Kim Sunghoon** (Republic of Korea): It is regrettable that my delegation has to exercise the right of reply in response to the statement made by North Korea (see A/CN.10/PV.378). I will be brief.

No one has any hostile policy towards Pyongyang, and neither is there any reason to do so. Why would there be? As for the military equipment and joint military exercises, they have been conducted only

for several decades to respond to the military threat from North Korea, and they are defensive in nature. We believe that the defence-oriented exercises of the United States-Korea joint alliance is a logical response by a responsible Government.

Throughout the past few years, the Government of the Republic of Korea has spared no effort to restart dialogue with North Korea to seek progress towards the complete denuclearization of, and lasting peace on, the Korean peninsula. We offer to hold a dialogue at a time and place and in a format that North Korea prefers.

Regrettably, all those sincere efforts met with not only a cold silence, but also continued provocations, which is a clear and flagrant violation of the legitimate Security Council resolutions.

**Mr. Sarwani** (Pakistan): In response to the statement of the Indian delegation, at the outset let me clarify that Jammu and Kashmir is not a part of India. The United Nations defines it as disputed territory. That is printed on all official maps of the United Nations. The final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir is to be decided by the Kashmiri people through a fair and impartial plebiscite under United Nations auspices, as stipulated in various Security Council resolutions. India accepted the Security Council resolutions. It must implement them. Its refusal to do so for seven decades constitutes a flagrant and continuing violation of the Security Council resolutions and of the Charter of the United Nations. Yet, with such an atrocious record of defying international legality, India harbours the ambition of becoming a permanent member of the Security Council. There can be no place in the rules-based international order for such an egregious violator to join that organ as a permanent member.

Contrary to the assertion made, the issues that we outline today in our statement are completely relevant to the Disarmament Commission's work, as they carry grave implications for regional and international peace and security. Like the missile incident, even if the Indian missile launch was accidental, it reveals serious gaps in India's ability to manage its strategic assets. We proposed a joint investigation to establish the facts of that disturbing incident. We conveyed a series of questions to India through the Security Council and the Secretary-General. Rather than saying that it is not a relevant forum to raise the matter, we would ask the Indian delegation to answer the questions that we put forward. The discussion in the Disarmament



Commission provides an opportunity to give answers to those questions. That is relevant to this Commission.

As for India's use of the canard of terrorism and sectarianism, regurgitating the stale arguments that are typical of all occupiers, India's reign of terror against its minorities continues unabated. The practitioner of the Hindutva ideology who rules India today has removed the mask of secularism to reveal the true face of Indian falsism. The so-called largest democracy has transformed into hate, violence, terror and Islamophobia. One cannot expect anything new from the purveyor of Hindutva. The Indian delegation would do well to reflect on the deeply troubling trajectory that India has embarked upon rather than indulging in a patent falsehood about Pakistan.

**Mr. Leschenko (Ukraine):** I would like to respond to the statement made by my Russian colleague from Moscow.

First, regarding the Budapest Memorandum, we heard nothing new in the position of the Russian Federation regarding that Memorandum. That sophisticated explanation appeared after 2014, when Russia occupied Ukrainian territories, namely, Crimea and certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. Before that, such a version actually did not exist.

I would like to draw the Commission's attention to some of the provisions of the Budapest Memorandum, which I will read out.

"The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America reaffirm their commitment to Ukraine, in accordance with the principles of the [Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe] Final Act, to respect the independence, sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine;

"The Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America reaffirm their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity and political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations."

I have no further comments on that issue.

With regard to the military operation in Ukraine, yesterday at his press conference, the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation, Mr. Nebenzia, recognized that it is not a military operation, but that it is a war on Ukrainian territory. I would like to say that the comment made by my Russian colleague once again underscores an inadequate perception of the current reality. The behaviour of Russian military forces on the territory of Ukraine and the mass atrocities of Russians on our territory, especially those that have been revealed in the Kyiv region, Bucha, Irpin and Hostomel and that will be revealed in other regions of Ukraine, have long surpassed the brutality of the Nazis in the 1940s. They have long since become Nazis and fascists by nature.

In the 1940s, Hitler also waged war on Europe, as did the former Soviet Union under the pretext of liberation, but we all know very well the final outcome of that. It seems that Russia is now moving along the same proven path, driving itself closer and closer to a dead end from which there will be no way out, except what was once seen for fascism and Nazism. If Russia wants to eradicate Nazism, it must start with itself and eradicate Nazism and fascism in the minds of its leadership and people, who have for years been bombarded by aggressive rhetoric on television. It looks like our colleagues are also the victims of such a bombardment.

I would once again like to say that nobody in Ukraine invited Russians troops to our territories, and the Ukrainian people perceive them as aggressors, robbers and criminals. Furthermore, the entire Ukrainian people rose up to fight against this aggression and war.

**The Chair:** I call on the representative of the Russian Federation on a point of order.

**Ms. Shestopalova (Russian Federation)** (*spoke in Russian*): I ask for your assistance, Mr. Chair, in maintaining a mutually respectful and diplomatic way of interacting among delegations. What we just heard from the representative of Ukraine indicates very clearly to us that he has no arguments left but using personal conjectures. I ask for your assistance, Sir, in ensuring that such things no longer occur.

By way of right of reply —

**The Chair:** The Russian Federation is inscribed on the list for rights of reply. She can comment now only on procedure. She will have the floor in a few minutes.

**Mr. Balouji** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I take the floor to reply to the unacceptable statements made by the delegations of Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

First, concerning Saudi Arabia's unwarranted allegations, as we specifically mentioned in our statement this morning (see A/CN.10/PV.379), those are baseless allegations, and, in fact, our missile programme is defensive and absolutely consistent with our international obligations. Rather, it is Saudi Arabia that should be urged to honour its commitments and respond positively to the frequent requests by the International Atomic Energy Agency for Saudi Arabia to sign the Agency's comprehensive safeguards agreement. We know for a fact that Iran is in the vanguard of fighting against terrorism in our region. We also know as a fact that Saudi Arabia used to export terrorists.

With regard to the statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom, I would like to underline the fact that it was not only Iran but many of the non-nuclear-weapon States in the world, including the 120 States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, that recognized the United Kingdom's initiative as contrary to its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We issued a communiqué jointly to reject that activity by the United Kingdom. I refer to the second paragraph of the communiqué, which reads,

"This policy is against the spirit and objectives of the NPT and demonstrates a clear case of non-compliance with the legal obligations of its article VI. Furthermore, it violates the agreed commitments adopted by consensus at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 sessions of the NPT Review Conference, in particular the commitments made to 'undertake further efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed'; to 'further diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security policies, doctrines and policies'; and to increase transparency with regard to the nuclear weapons capabilities".

Clearly, the United Kingdom's activities under its Integrated Review 2021 run contrary to its legal obligations under the NPT.

Against the backdrop of the unacceptable statement by the representative of the United States, I should stress that we know as a fact that the United States Government has been continuously proliferating nuclear weapons, both qualitatively and quantitatively. What the Government of the United States is doing runs precisely counter to its legal obligations under the NPT.

We therefore urge both the United Kingdom and the United States to honour their legal, ethical and moral obligations under the NPT.

**Mr. Dandy** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have requested the right of reply to respond to the remarks contained in the statement of the representative of the Israeli entity.

The representative of the Israeli entity attempted to draw attention away from a clear fact that the real threat in our region, the Middle East, is posed by Israel's nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The Israeli entity is the last that has the right to talk about disarmament issues. It is the one that introduced terrorism into the Middle East region. The Israeli entity is not party to any agreement on nuclear, biological or chemical weapons of mass destruction. It is the entity that develops and upgrades nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as upgrading their means of delivery.

The Israeli entity has provided terrorist groups such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh) and the Al-Nusra Front, along with other terrorist groups, with weapons, equipment and munitions, including toxic chemical materials. Experts of this entity in the area of chemical weapons have trained terrorists on using and mixing chemical material to be used against civilians and military personnel in Syria. We have submitted such information to the Security Council, the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004).

The Middle East remains one of the glaring examples of the challenges facing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its non-universality because Israel insists on defying the international community's resolve and continues to systematically violate relevant international resolutions and the norms and rules enshrined in the NPT.

**Ms. Shestopalova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I am compelled to respond to the previous

statements by speakers who denigrated the Russian army and the special military operation being carried out in Ukraine. I want to underscore the fact that we have hundreds, if not thousands, of video testimonies from people willing to attest to the brutality of Ukrainian nationalists. It is actually for them that all of the things that my Ukrainian colleague listed hold true to the full extent.

I will cite some of the first-hand accounts. I warn the Commission of their brutal content. Natalia Kudinova tells us that the mayor was one of the first people to flee the city. Subsequently, the Ukrainian authorities lied when they asserted that Russia does not allow people access to humanitarian corridors. Women with children were held in basements under the threat of death by the Azov Battalion. Peaceful civilians were also robbed at checkpoints by its members. A grandmother, who was with her grandchildren, said that the Azov Battalion did not allow people to leave their basement bunker and would shoot to kill anyone attempting to leave.

Maria Vasilyeva told how she had been tortured by the Ukrainian security forces in Kramatorsk. She was bound to a sewage pipe when they had found out that she was a Russian. They beat her, tortured her with electric shocks, raped her and threatened to do the same to her underage daughter.

There are many such stories, and they are all documented. I am certain that time will tell which side was telling the truth.

**Mr. Sharoni** (Israel): I am sorry that I have to take the floor again in order to express Israel's right of reply to some of the allegations made here by the Syrian representative.

In April 2021, the second report by the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT) of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) (S/1943/2021) on the Syrian use of chemical weapons was published. Together with its report of April 2020 (S/1867/2020), both reports attribute responsibility for four different chemical attacks on civilians in 2017 and 2018 to the Syrian Government, which acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and vowed to forego its entire chemical weapons programme.

Both IIT reports came out after several reports and findings by the OPCW Declaration Assessment Team and Fact-Finding mission (FMM) and the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism, which

owing to the concerns of the international community were established subsequent to first time Syria used chemical weapons on its own citizen in 2012. Recent reports by the FMM confirms several other cases of the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

The IIT reports clearly call on the Syrian Government to cooperate with the OPCW and the international community in identifying the gaps and discrepancies in its declaration on chemical weapons and take full responsibility and accountability for its actions in violation of its obligations under the CWC and with regard to the destruction of its chemical-weapons arsenal. Having failed to fulfil its commitment within the specific time frame, the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention at its twenty-fifth session on 22 April 2021 suspended certain rights and privileges of Syria under the Convention. It is vital that the international community remain vigilant in dealing with the challenges of serious non-compliance in order to prevent the further erosion of the absolute norm against the use of chemical weapons and to reinstate it. The international community must also continue to investigate serious current capabilities and activities with regard to its chemical-weapons programme.

**Mr. Kim In Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I am compelled to take the floor once again to exercise my second right of reply in response to the statement made by the representative of South Korea. The South Korean representative just mentioned that their policies are not hostile towards Pyongyang, that they are pursuing dialogue and that their joint-military exercises with the United States are of a defensive nature. Let me briefly comment on those statements, one by one.

First, I just mentioned the recent reckless remark made by the South Korean Defence Minister concerning a pre-emptive strike against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. If South Korea is not pursuing a hostile policy towards Pyongyang, how are we to understand the South Korean Defence Minister's remark about a pre-emptive strike against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea? Is it hostile, or is it friendly? It is not difficult to judge.

Secondly, as for dialogue, South Korea, more often than not, blows its own horn on dialogue, backed by strong force. We can see from their remarks the true intention of South Korea when its representatives talk about any possible dialogue. Actually speaking, we

have no interest in dialogue that seeks to disarm the Democratic People's Republic of Korea unilaterally.

As for the military exercises, South Korea argues that the joint military exercises with the United States are of a defensive nature. And, if the exercises are of a defensive nature, why do the United States and South Korea not hold joint military exercises far away from the Korean peninsula, instead of holding them at the doorstep and in plain sight of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea?

Why are the United States and South Korea deploying nuclear assets and advanced weapons systems whenever they hold joint military exercises? They argue that such exercises are defensive in nature, but if anyone happened to take a closer look at the war plans of the joint military exercises, they would gain a clear understanding of their true nature.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to urge South Korea to immediately stop joining in the military exercises and arms build-up, which will disrupt peace and security on the Korean peninsula. I would like to recall the fact that the Korean peninsula is technically still at war, so any slight misjudgement or errant statement rattling the other party and the present situation could become a spark triggering dangerous conflict and full-blown war. That is a fact known by all.

**Mr. Leschenko** (Ukraine): I apologize for taking the floor again, but I must respond to the remarks made by my Russian colleague.

Disinformation has become a tradition of the Russian delegation here in New York, as was said earlier today at the Security Council meeting devoted to the humanitarian situation in Ukraine (see S/PV.9011). The President of Ukraine and the Permanent Representative

of Ukraine have made statements and commented on some footage to which our attention was drawn. The disinformation presented at that Security Council meeting was simply repeated here. The recording of that meeting is also available on the United Nations website.

**Mr. Dandy** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am compelled to take the floor once again to make a further statement in response to the accusations made by the representative of the Israeli entity.

The Syrian Arab Republic stresses once again that the use of chemical weapons, under any circumstances, no matter where, when or by whom, is condemned and totally rejected. That is why my country voluntarily joined the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2013.

I would like to remind the representative of the Israeli entity of his country's bloody history, which he represents but seems that he is not aware of it. The Israeli entity is the only one that possesses weapons of mass destruction in our region, in addition to nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the Israeli entity is the first to have used biological and chemical weapons in the Middle East. If he so wishes, I can give him a summary of the actions undertaken by his entity since 1948 to date.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of Israel on a point of order.

**Mr. Sharoni** (Israel): I would like to make a point of order asking the Chair to remind the representative of Syria to use my country's official name: the State of Israel.

**The Chair:** We have now exhausted the list of speakers for the general exchange of views.

*The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.*