

Nuclear threats and common security in Europe in light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine

Background and recommendations to the 29th Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly

Background

The Russian invasion of Ukraine - in violation the UN Charter and OSCE commitments and principles – has resulted in a humanitarian catastrophe in Ukraine, a refugee crisis in the wider region, and a severe erosion of security and trust in Europe. It has elevated the risks of further escalation of armed conflict and of nuclear war. And it has impacted negatively on a range of other security issues including energy supply, climate change, public health/covid management and implementation of the sustainable development goals.

Addressing this issue should be a priority for the OSCE and the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Roles of the OSCE and other security bodies

There are a number of security bodies in the European environment. These include, in particular, the United Nations, European Union, NATO and the OSCE.

All of these security bodies are based on the importance of [state and individual] rights and responsibilities under international law. However, the bodies have been established with different purposes, and thus have complementary roles to play in advancing peace and security.

The UN was established as a **global security organization** to prevent war and advance social development. NATO was established as a **collective defence organization**. It's primary role is to deter aggression against its members, and respond collectively if attacked. The EU was established as a **collective security organization**. Its primary role is to advance economic and human security amongst its members. The OSCE was established as a **common/cooperative security organization**. Its primary role is to seek security for all through conflict resolution, trust-building, protecting human rights and advancing democracy.

Below are recommendations of amendments to the [Draft resolution for the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security for the 26th Annual Assembly of the OSCEPA](#). The recommendations take into account the differing roles of the key European security bodies, and in particular the roles of the OSCE and its parliamentary assembly.

For further background on common security in Europe and globally, we commend the [Common Security Report 2022](#).

Recommended amendments to the Draft resolution for the General Committee on Political Affairs and Security

1. Emphasise the key roles of the OSCE:

Amendment:

Change the order of the paragraphs so that para 18 becomes para 1, para 17 becomes para 2, para 16 becomes para 3 and para 15 becomes para 4.

Explanation:

It is important to restate these core principles of the OSCE up front for two reasons. Firstly, it will ensure that subsequent paragraphs criticizing one or more OSCE member states are correctly perceived as implementation of the OSCE principles and not as bias against those countries. Secondly, it is important to ensure that the important roles of the OSCE (and the Parliamentary Assembly) to facilitate dialogue, diplomacy and conflict resolution in the Russia/Ukraine conflict are supported, along with the other roles of the OSCE (and Parliamentary Assembly) to condemn violations of the OSCE principles and international law.

2. Strengthen the legal measures regarding the Ukraine conflict

Amendment:

Change para 21 to add, after 'Human Rights Council': *"the International Court of Justice in its case regarding the allegations of genocide in Ukraine, and..."*

Explanation.

Russia argued its invasion of Ukraine was necessary to address genocide being undertaken by Ukraine in the Donbas region. The case in the International Court of Justice, lodged by Ukraine under the Genocide Convention, is the appropriate legal approach to take with regard to allegations of violations of the convention, and the responsibilities arising from any such violations.

3. Support nuclear risk reduction

Amendment:

Add after current para 1: *"Extremely concerned at the risk of nuclear war arising from the nuclear arms race and the operational readiness to use nuclear weapons, which have increased significantly by the Russian invasion of Ukraine and pronouncements from Russian leadership threatening to use nuclear weapons if other countries intervene against the invasion."*

Amendment:

Add after current para 19: *"Re-affirms the Reagan-Gorbachev dictum that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, and urges all nuclear armed and allied states to implement this through no-first-use declarations and agreements, and by further reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines."*

Explanation

The five nuclear weapon states parties to the NPT (China, France, Russia, the UK and the USA) agreed in a joint statement in January this year that 'a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.' The Russian invasion of Ukraine has been a step back from this agreement, and has elevated the threat of nuclear war. However, the fact that nuclear weapons have not

been used provides a political opening to reaffirm the Reagan-Gorbachev dictum and advance operational measures to implement this, including taking nuclear weapons off alert and adopting policies never to initiate nuclear weapons use (no-first-use policies). India and China have already adopted no-first-use policies, and there is growing momentum for the other nuclear armed states to do so as well.

For further background see: [No-first-use of nuclear weapons: An Exploration of Unilateral, Bilateral and Plurilateral Approaches and their Security, Risk-reduction and Disarmament Implications](#), a civil society working paper to the NPT Review Conference, and [Fulfil the NPT: From nuclear threats to human security](#)” an Open Letter to the States Parties to the NPT endorsed by over 1200 policy makers, academics, Nobel laureates, former military leaders, religious leaders and representatives of civil society.

4. **Support nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament**

Add after current para 14: “*Highlighting the importance of the 2022 Review Conference of States Parties the Non-Proliferation Treaty, August 1-26 to make progress on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.*”

Add after current para 30: “*Encourages participating states to implement the disarmament obligation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by ending investments in the nuclear weapons industry, ending the production of nuclear weapons, and committing to the global, verified elimination of nuclear weapons no later than 2045, the 75th anniversary of the NPT.*”

Explanation. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. States parties include nuclear armed, allied and non-nuclear states. Progress on nuclear disarmament at the 2022 review conference (the first one in seven years) will help strengthen non-proliferation measures. Nuclear armed states can end the production of new nuclear weapons as an incremental disarmament measure. Non-nuclear countries can end investments of public funds in the nuclear weapons industry in order to de-incentivize the nuclear arms race. In order to build political will and action for nuclear disarmament, a timeframe should be adopted. Elimination by 2045 is realistic. With such a goal adopted, it could even be achieved earlier. Without such a goal being adopted, it is unlikely that serious negotiations on nuclear disarmament will begin.

For further background see [NWC Reset: Frameworks for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World](#), a civil society working paper to the NPT Review Conference

This background paper and recommendations is prepared by **Alyn Ware**, *PNND Global Coordinator*; **Uta Zapf**, *PNND Inaugural Co-President and Former Chair of the Bundestag Subcommittee on Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-proliferation*; and **Christine Muttonen**, *PNND Co-President and former President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly*.

Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) is a global network of legislators working on a range of initiatives to prevent nuclear proliferation and to achieve a nuclear weapons free world.

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info@pnnd.org