

 Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations in New York



## **JOINT STATEMENT IN RELATION TO THE RECENT ORDERS BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO INCREASE THE READINESS OF ITS NUCLEAR ARSENAL**

**New York, NY, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.**

We express our grave concern and rejection of recent orders by the Russian Federation to increase the readiness of its nuclear arsenal. We call on Russia to adhere to the Joint Statement of the Five Nuclear Weapons States on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races of January 2022, in particular, the affirmation that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”, and to urgently pursue action towards nuclear de-escalation, risk reduction, and to implement all commitments and obligations related to nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation.

We strongly condemn the threat of use of nuclear weapons. Any threat of use of force is prohibited by the UN Charter, and when they involve nuclear weapons, they exacerbate tensions, increase exponentially the risk of miscalculation and accidents and become an incentive for proliferation. We condemn all use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by any actor, under any circumstances.

We recall the present threat to humanity and our planet posed by the existence of nuclear weapons. Any use of nuclear weapons would cause a catastrophic humanitarian impact of local, regional, and global scope, and the harm these weapons could inflict on humans, animals, plants, land, ecosystems, societies, and economies, would last for generations.

We recall that the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapon (NPT) is the cornerstone of the disarmament and nonproliferation regime, and deplore threats or actions that risk undermining it. We highlight the value of multilateral cooperation and diplomacy at times of security tensions and mistrust. The creation of the NPT and the establishment of Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zones, amidst the Cold War, represent nuclear diplomacy in times of severe nuclear tensions. We also recall that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons expressly prohibits any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. All disarmament commitments and obligations must be respected and upheld.

Nuclear disarmament is an international legal obligation and a humanitarian and moral imperative. We urge renewed engagement by all nuclear armed states to enable concrete progress on nuclear disarmament. We call on all the UN members and the international community to re-commit to seeking a safer world for all and to achieve the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.

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