



# IRELAND

Cluster 2

Statement by

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at the

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PERMANENT MISSION OF IRELAND  
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS IN VIENNA  
ROTENTURMSTRASSE 16-18, A1010 VIENNA

Mr Chairman,

I wish to associate my remarks with those of the European Union.

Ireland strongly supports the three, mutually reinforcing pillars of the NPT, the important work of the IAEA and the CTBTO, and we are resolute in our commitment to international non-proliferation, which we see as critically important in its own right, as well as complementing and reinforcing our work on nuclear disarmament.

The proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery remain an ever present, and indeed as we have been discussing here last week, increasing threat to international peace and security. Given the interconnected nature of the world we live in today, multilateral tools and regimes, which can help to raise both awareness of, and prevent such proliferation, assume critical importance. With regard to WMD's and their means of delivery, the Missile Technology Control Regime constitutes a key instrument in international efforts to prevent missile proliferation. Significantly, this year marks 30 years since the MTCR was established and since that time the MTCR has proven to be a useful multilateral non-proliferation mechanism. Through information sharing, export controls, awareness raising and international cooperation, the MTCR has significantly reduced the ability of proliferators to acquire the technology, information and means to develop WMD missile deliver systems.

Ireland strongly supports UNSC Resolutions 1540 and 2325, adopted last December following last year's Review, and we commend the work on this by our Spanish colleagues. We are active in all of the relevant export control

regimes and also engage with the GICNT. I am pleased to report that, consistent with our commitment to international non-proliferation, later this year, Ireland will assume, along with our Icelandic partners, the co-chairmanship of the MTCR and we will host the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Plenary in Dublin from 16 to 23 October. We are honoured to take up this role, together with Iceland, and are grateful for the valuable support we have received so far, from both partners and non-partners alike. During our tenure as joint co-chair, we will seek to enhance the effectiveness of the MTCR through information sharing and awareness raising, with both partners and non-partners, to ensure that the MTCR as a regime retains its efficacy in the face of ever evolving technical and security developments and we will seek to extend the impact and influence that this regime can bring to bear.

The task ahead will not be an easy one, given the ever-evolving nature of the threats we face. In the digital age, we face threats hitherto considered unlikely. In recent times, the vulnerability of cyber infrastructure, both civilian and military, has been challenged and compromised. We have, in recent times, witnessed the acceleration of missile programmes in certain countries, enabled through illicit procurement, intangible technology transfer and perhaps, as some suggest, through cyber espionage. As reported in the recent important UNIDIR/Chatham House paper on Risk, we live in an age where cyber technologies are in the grasp of most states, regardless of their economic capacities, as well as non-state actors. This levels the strategic playing field and creates hitherto unparalleled opportunities for small belligerent governments or terrorist groups to instigate high impact attacks. This heightens the risk, not only of an unintended nuclear detonation, but also the determinative impact the manipulation of data may have in decision making.

The acceleration in missile programmes can be seen in stark terms in North Korea. Despite international sanctions and pressure, the North Korean regime continues to conduct missile tests, which undermine international peace, stability and security.

These actions constitute a violation of international obligations not to produce or test nuclear weapons and demonstrate a blatant disregard for the rule of law. Our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Charles Flanagan T.D., has joined with our international partners in repeatedly condemning these continued violations of international commitments. Minister Flanagan has stated that these tests "constitute a major challenge to international efforts to advance global nuclear disarmament and non- proliferation, a long standing goal of Ireland's foreign policy. These acts are reckless and provocative and will only lead to more severe diplomatic isolation for the regime, with detrimental impacts on the lives of North Korean people".

Mr Chairman,

To be consistent and effective, our focus must be on the weapon and the impact of the weapon, not on the actor and we bring this approach to our work on all weapons issues. We endorse the former UNSG view that there are no right hands for the wrong weapons. Given all the risk factors, our vigilance and efforts on disarmament and non-proliferation are needed now more than ever. Ireland stands with our international partners and will work tirelessly during our tenure as MTCR co-chair, to prevent proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery.

Mr Chairman, to conclude,

Security concerns and the security environment have been a recurring theme in our discussions, but when we speak of security, especially when it comes to weapons which respect no boundaries, and which if used would spread their poison through the air, to damage human, animal and plant life across continents, as well as polluting our water and soil, with the potential to cause famine and change our weather for a decade or more, it is also important to adjust the perspective, from national, regional, international and take a global view. In this regard, Ireland is pleased to introduce shortly a new Working Paper on how our work in this Review Cycle should be undertaken in context, not just the security context but also the wider, global governance context, mentioned by many delegates here, of poverty, development, climate, environment and gender. This new Working Paper is based on our collaborative research with Chatham House since 2015, an updated version of which has been made available for delegates outside the room. We hope that this will re-energise our efforts throughout this Review Cycle.

Thank you.

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