NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Report No. 27 (2007–2008) to the Storting

Disarmament and Non-proliferation

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Translation from the Norwegian. For information only.

Contents

Abbreviations used in the text

ABM	Anti-ballistic Missiles Treaty
BTWC	Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
CFE	Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
CWC	Chemical Weapons Convention
FMCT	Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty
HEU	Highly enriched uranium
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
INF	Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty
LEU	Low-enriched uranium
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NPT	Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty
OST	Outer Space Treaty
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
SORT	Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

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Recommendation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 30 May 2008, approved in the Council of State the same date. (the Stoltenberg II Government)

1 Introduction

The Government is working to promote a UN-led world order based on cooperation between states, where conflicts are resolved on the basis of international law, and all use of force is in conformity with the UN Charter.

The Government believes that improved security for all can be achieved at considerably lower levels of armaments than those that exist today. This will require balanced and verifiable reductions. Furthermore, extensive disarmament will free up substantial resources that can be used for human and social development.

The Government's aim is that Norway should take a proactive role in promoting arms control and disarmament as regards nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. We will seek to achieve this through binding international cooperation that is as broad-based as possible, in line with the Government's policy platform.

The challenges are formidable, as regards both nuclear and conventional weapons. The number of nuclear-weapon states has increased since the end of the Cold War, and several more countries have attempted to acquire nuclear weapons. The proliferation of nuclear technology will increase in parallel with the expected increase in civilian nuclear energy capacity in the years ahead. This will pose new challenges to the non-proliferation efforts. At the same time, we know that terrorists are actively seeking to acquire weapons of mass destruction. The Government therefore gives high priority to efforts to prevent the proliferation of such weapons.

However, we know that most of those who are killed or wounded in modern wars are victims of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and other light weapons. The vast majority of them are civilians. The largest share of global military spending goes to conventional weapons and equipment. In many cases, the trade in such weapons – particularly small arms – is very poorly controlled and often veiled in secrecy and a lack of transparency. This paves the way for corruption and crime. Certain types of conventional weapons have particularly serious humanitarian consequences. These include landmines and cluster munitions, and also small arms due the large number of such arms that are in circulation in conflict areas. Landmines and cluster munitions do not distinguish between civilians and military personnel, and they kill and injure civilians both during and after conflicts. The Government therefore considers it particularly important to regulate the use of such weapons, for example by means of international bans.

Added together, the challenges we are faced with are huge. However, extensive arms control and disarmament efforts are being carried out under the auspices of the UN and other international organisations, in a number of other multinational arenas and at bilateral level. Norway participates actively in these efforts, and the Government wants to further strengthen our proactive role. The Seven-Nation Initiative, which in addition to Nor-

way, involves Australia, Chile, Indonesia, Romania, South Africa and the UK, is a key element here.

The following chapter explores the main challenges that international arms control and disarmament efforts are confronted with, while Chapter 3 presents the Government's priorities and concrete measures and initiatives in these fields.

2 Challenges

Following the end of the Cold War there were great expectations that the arms race between the US and the former Soviet Union would come to a halt and be replaced by disarmament and cooperation. There was also a hope that rapprochement between the two former rivals would reduce tension between their allies and pave the way for disarmament, cooperation and development in many parts of the world.

Several developments in the 1990s confirmed this positive trend. Both Russia and the US carried out large cuts in their weapons arsenals and engaged in closer cooperation on disarmament and securing nuclear material. The Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) achieved almost universal adherence and was extended indefinitely in 1995.

The nuclear tests carried out by France in the 1990s triggered strong reactions all over the world, including in Norway. However, in 1996 the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was signed, and in 1997 the Chemical Weapons Convention entered into force. South Africa abandoned its nuclear weapons programme, and nuclear weapons deployed in former Soviet republics Kazakhstan, Belarus and Ukraine were either dismantled or transferred to Russia.

As regards conventional weapons, the 1992 Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) led to a 50% reduction in the amount of military equipment in Europe in the course of a few years, and the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine Ban Treaty) was a milestone in humanitarian arms control efforts. Never before had such extensive disarmament measures been implemented in such a short period of time.

There were, however, also a number of negative developments. The most serious of these were India's and Pakistan's nuclear tests in 1998, North Korea's undisguised nuclear ambitions and Iraq's secret weapons programme in the wake of the first Gulf War. These developments led to increased regional tension and undermined efforts to promote further nuclear arms control and disarmament. They also revealed serious flaws in the international non-proliferation regime.

Alongside these developments, considerable conventional stockpiling was taking place in several countries, due in part to the large supply of weapons from former Warsaw Pact states and increased focus on new markets from the weapons industry in both the East and the West.

The beginning of the millennium has not been encouraging as regards arms control and disarmament efforts. On the contrary, we have seen considerable stockpiling in a number of countries, particularly in the US, China and Russia. In 2007, the total global military spending reached approximately NOK 6 500 billion. This is an increase of 37% compared with 1997.

The fight against international terrorism has also fuelled military stockpiling. The growing tension in many regions, not least in the Middle East, has also contributed to this. So have the strained relations between Russia and the US. China has also increased its armaments considerably in recent years and now ranks fourth in terms of military spending, after the US, the UK and France. Mounting tension, combined with a stronger economy and increased national assertiveness in many countries, indicates that we may be on the verge of a new arms race, as regards both conventional and nuclear weapons.

2.1 Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

Between them, Russia and the US possess more than 95% of the world's nuclear weapons. The remaining 5% belong to China, France, the UK, India, Pakistan and North Korea. Israel is not willing to confirm or deny that it possesses such weapons.

Although Russia and the US have more than halved their nuclear arsenals since the end of the Cold War, they still have about 27 000 nuclear warheads, of which roughly half are operative. A small fraction of these weapons would be sufficient to destroy the world.

Box 2.1 START 1 and SORT

START 1 (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), which was negotiated by the US and the Soviet Union in the 1980s, is the most extensive nuclear disarmament treaty ever concluded. Under this treaty, the nuclear arsenals of the two states have been reduced by about two thirds.

In May 2002, the US and Russia signed SORT (Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty). This is also a nuclear disarmament agreement, but unlike START it does not contain any provisions on the physical destruction of warheads or verification of such destruction.

There is broad consensus among most politicians and military experts that nuclear weapons are useless except as deterrents, and then mainly in relation to other nuclear powers. Their usefulness as deterrents is gradually declining in the face of terrorism and other modern security challenges.

Nevertheless, there is little indication that the nuclear states are planning further reductions in their nuclear arsenals. Russia and the US appear to be meeting their reduction commitments under the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and the Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT). It is, however, unclear what will happen when these treaties expire in 2009 and 2012 respectively, (see also fact box 2.1).

The future of the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), which prohibits the US and Russia from possessing ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5500 kilometres, is also uncertain, because Russia has expressed doubt as to whether the treaty still serves the country's security interests.

The fact that the today's nuclear powers, and particularly the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, seem reluctant to make further reductions in their nuclear arsenals reinforces the idea that nuclear weapons are important in order to gain international respect and major-power status.

Several nuclear powers are also developing smaller, more sophisticated nuclear weapons, thereby indicating that they consider nuclear weapons to be of military use, and this could lower the threshold for using such weapons.

It is generally presumed that there are nine nuclear weapon states at present. That is an increase of three since the signing of the NPT 40 years ago. However, there are more than 40 countries that currently do not possess nuclear weapons but have a civilian nuclear capacity that relatively quickly could be converted into military programmes. This figure is expected to increase in the years to come. There is therefore justifiable cause for concern that new countries will acquire nuclear weapons.

At present, it is Iran that poses the greatest challenge as regards the proliferation of nuclear weapons. For many years the country has had a secret nuclear programme and has deliberately tried to deceive the international community.

Even after Iran's nuclear programme was revealed in 2002, the Iranian authorities have by no means shown sufficient willingness to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Nor has Iran acted on the international community's demand that it suspend sensitive nuclear activities such as the enrichment of uranium and the building of a heavy water reactor. In addition, Iran has an extensive missile programme and is developing missiles that have an increasingly longer range.

The two unanimous Security Council resolutions adopted in December 2006 and March 2007, respectively, which imposed limited sanctions aimed at getting Iran to change its course, seem to have had only limited effect. On 3 March this year, the Security Council adopted a new resolution which further tightened the sanctions.

Iran poses a particular challenge because it is to be expected that a number of other states in the region will want to acquire nuclear weapons if Iran should do so.

Although it is presumed that Iran is not pursuing an active nuclear weapons programme at the moment, there is persistent uneasiness in the region and in the international community that the authorities will build up the necessary capacities to make the development of nuclear weapons possible within a short period of time. It is therefore essential that Iran provides full transparency about its nuclear programme and allows the IAEA to monitor it.

No one is questioning Iran's right to develop civilian nuclear power. However, the experience gained during the past few decades indicates that there is every reason to be on guard with regard to Iran's true nuclear ambitions.

North Korea's nuclear weapons programme is another main challenge facing the international community. Despite progress in the negotiations generally referred to as the six-party talks, North

Box 2.2 Nuclear testing

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was concluded in 1996. However, it has not yet entered into force because not all nuclear-weapon states and states that are presumed to possess technology that could enable them to develop nuclear weapons have ratified the treaty, and this is one of the conditions for its entry into force. Norway ratified the treaty on 15 July 1999. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization's Provisional Technical Secretariat is, among other things, responsible for the International Monitoring System (IMS), which monitors the earth for evidence of nuclear explosions. Norway has four seismological stations (Hamar, Karasjok, Svalbard and Jan Mayen) that monitor the underground environment, and two infrasound and radionuclide stations (Svalbard and Karasjok) that monitor the atmosphere environment and can detect radioactive debris from nuclear explosions.

Korea does not appear to be prepared to terminate its nuclear weapons programme. The efforts to find a lasting solution are ongoing, but previous experience with North Korea indicates that we must have realistic expectations.

A halt in nuclear test explosions is an important means of preventing the development of new nuclear weapons. It is therefore encouraging that several nuclear weapons states have declared that they will refrain from new test explosions.

However, countries such as China, India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea and the US have not adhered to the CTBT and are thus not bound under international law to refrain from nuclear test explosions. Their adherence to the treaty would be an important step towards preventing the development of new weapons and dismantling existing nuclear arsenals (see also fact box 2.2).

Access to high-quality fissile material is a prerequisite for the development of nuclear weapons. A ban on the production of weapons-grade fissile material would therefore be an important contribution to the efforts to prevent nuclear stockpiling and a nuclear arms race. There has for a long time been international agreement that the next step must be to negotiate such a ban.

There is, however, still no agreement on launching negotiations, partly because the nuclear weapons states that have remained outside the NPT and that have not stockpiled such material are for the time being unwilling to take on binding commitments in this field. A further complication arises from the fact that the US, unlike almost all other countries, is advocating that the treaty should not include transparency and verification mechanisms.

The 1967 Outer Space Treaty (OST) prohibits the permanent deployment of weapons of mass destruction in outer space. On the other hand it does not prohibit making use of space for combat operations or as a transit area for ballistic missiles. It therefore has significant flaws and should be modernised.

The plans for extending the US missile defence system to cover parts of Europe has led to strong protests, not least on the part of Russia. Viewed in isolation, a missile defence system can provide increased protection against ballistic missiles within a given geographical area, but the Government questions whether such a system would improve security at the international level. We believe that the threats posed by ballistic missiles need to be addressed using a wide range of measures, primarily political and diplomatic.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays a key role in the international efforts to uncover secret programmes for the development of nuclear weapons. Its inspection regime is the most important tool in this respect. In 1997 a new mechanism, the Additional Protocol, was adopted to strengthen the IAEA's inspection regime.

The Additional Protocol is essential to the IAEA's ability to verify that a given country's nuclear activities are of an exclusively civilian nature. It is a problem that a large number of countries, including in the Middle East, have not signed the Additional Protocol.

Furthermore, the persistently high price of oil, strong economic growth and the challenges posed by climate change have made nuclear power more attractive as a source of energy for many countries, including developing countries. There is therefore reason to believe that the use of such energy will increase in the future. Since the technology used to produce nuclear fuel is by and large the same as that used for producing weapons-grade material, there is reason to believe that the proliferation risk will also increase in years to come.

All of the 186 countries that are currently party to the NPT have the right to develop and use nuclear power for civilian purposes. For most of the states parties this right is just as important as

the two other pillars of the NPT, i.e. nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This underlines the need for comprehensive solutions.

Since 2005, the US and India have been negotiating an agreement on civilian nuclear cooperation. Both the US and India point out that the agreement is important in order to meet India's energy needs. Others believe that the agreement will undermine the non-proliferation regime since India has not joined the NPT and is not willing to renounce its nuclear weapons. It is still uncertain when the agreement will be finalised. The issue is being debated both in the US Congress and in the Indian Parliament.

Close cooperation on the use of civilian nuclear energy has generally been reserved for countries that have joined – and are therefore bound by – the NPT. It is in any case important to ensure that other countries are not treated in the same way as India. This would seriously undermine the NPT.

Highly enriched uranium (HEU) is currently being used in a number of research reactors and to a certain extent also as fuel for submarines and ice-breakers. HEU is also an important input in the production of nuclear weapons. The fear is therefore that terrorist groups could gain access to HEU from civilian installations and use it to produce simple nuclear weapons.

There is also a risk that terrorist groups could get hold of radioactive material and use it to make radiological weapons, so-called dirty bombs. Although the explosive power of such weapons is no greater than that of other conventional bombs, they could cause considerable panic, partly because of the fear of serious health consequences.

The terrorist attacks on the US on 11 September 2001 and subsequent terrorist attacks in Europe, the Middle East and Asia have demonstrated that terrorists have no compunction about launching large-scale attacks on civilians. On the contrary, terrorist actions are today claiming more civilian lives than ever before.

There is little doubt that a number of terrorist groups will be willing to use weapons of mass destruction if they gain access to such weapons. We saw an example of this in 1995, when an Japanese extremist group attempted to carry out mass murder on the Tokyo Underground by means of chemical gases.

Most countries have undertaken not to produce or use chemical or biological weapons. However, one of the challenges that remains will be to strengthen the two conventions that prohibit the use of such weapons in order to speed up progress in the efforts to prevent the proliferation of hazardous chemical and biological substances and destroy existing stockpiles of such weapons in a safe manner.

It is also the case that a large number of developing countries do not have the capacity to enforce the control they have undertaken to carry out. This applies both to the physical protection of hazardous materials and to the control of export and transit of materials and technology that can be used for the production of weapons of mass destruction.

We must recognise that deliberate efforts are being made to circumvent existing measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Both states and criminal networks can be behind such unlawful activities. The "Khan network" in Pakistan was uncovered as recently as in 2003. This network had specialised in illegal trade in technology and equipment for the production of nuclear weapons, and had connections in countries such as North Korea, Libya and Iran. The challenges in this area have led to strengthened international intelligence cooperation with a view to preventing illegal trade in such equipment and technology.

2.2 Conventional weapons

The 1992 Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) has played a key role in safeguarding stability and security in post-Cold-War Europe. The treaty has led to extensive conventional disarmament by imposing limitations on many types of weapons, and to greater transparency and confidence through the regular exchange of information and comprehensive verification and inspection schemes.

At the 1999 summit of the Organization for Security and Co-operation (OSCE) in Europe, it was agreed that the treaty should be adapted to take into account the foreign and security policy developments that had taken place in Europe since the treaty was originally concluded. However, the adapted treaty was never ratified by the NATO countries due to Russia's failure to withdraw from Georgia and Moldova, and thus never entered into force.

Russia suspended its participation in the CFE Treaty as from 12 December 2007. The suspension entails that Russia no longer considers itself obliged to comply with the treaty and will no longer provide information about its armed forces nor allow inspections on its territory.

Box 2.3 The Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE)

The CFE Treaty was negotiated in the late 1980s and entered into force in 1992. The parties to the treaty were the then members of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. The main purpose of the treaty was to reduce the offensive military capacities of the two blocs and create a balance between their conventional forces. The treaty covers tanks, armoured combat vehicles, artillery pieces, combat aircraft and attack helicopters. It specifies ceilings for both individual countries and geographic zones. The northern flank covers Norway, Iceland and northwestern Russia. Treaty-limited equipment may only be transferred to the flanks on a temporary basis and limited scale. The future of the CFE Treaty is uncertain following Russia's suspension of its participation on 12 December 2007.

There is at present ongoing contact between the NATO countries and Russia with a view to continuing the CFE regime (see also fact box 2.3). But there is a real danger that the most comprehensive and successful conventional disarmament agreement ever may fall apart in the foreseeable future.

Over the years, the OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation has developed a number of confidence- and security-building measures, which are set out in the 1999 Vienna Document. The purpose of the measures is to enhance confidence, cooperation and security among all of the OSCE's participating states. The OSCE obligations are similar to those set out in the CFE Treaty, but are not binding under international law and are far less extensive, particularly as regards exchange of information and verification.

The OSCE Treaty on Open Skies (OS), which entered into force on 1 January 2002, requires member states to reciprocally open their air space to aerial observation flights using specially equipped observation aircraft. The OS Treaty complements and underpins the CFE Treaty, as does the Vienna Document. However, neither of these agreements can fill the vacuum created by Russia's suspension of the CFE Treaty.

Civilians are being affected by war to an increasing degree. In modern wars, civilians typically account for between 70% and 90% of the victims, who are often mainly women and children. Civilian populations suffer particularly from the effects of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions, as these weapons do not distinguish between civilians and combatants, and can remain armed and explode several years after a conflict has ended. Unexploded submunitions are also a major obstacle to development, because agricultural land, roads and other infrastructure cannot be used and refugees and displaced persons are unable to return to their homes until vast resources have been used to clear mines and cluster munitions. Assisting victims puts an additional strain on limited health care resources. As a result, the whole society is affected.

The consequences for the civilian population have led to increased focus on humanitarian concerns in connection with wars and conflicts. The 1997 Mine Ban Convention prohibits the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines. It also contains important provisions on assistance to victims, reporting, and international cooperation on implementation. The Mine Ban Convention is therefore an important tool for improving the safety of civilians in conflict areas.

So far, 156 countries have become party to the Mine Ban Convention, and the number is increasing.

In accordance with one of the convention's key provisions, each state party undertakes to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control no later than ten years after the entry into force of the convention for that state party. A number of affected countries are having trouble complying with this provision. Several of them will therefore have to apply for an extension of the deadline. It is regrettable that countries such as China, Russia, India, Pakistan, the US, Egypt and Finland have chosen not to join the convention. Landmine Monitor and other organisations that survey the global landmine situation on an annual basis have reported that there are only a few cases of landmines being used by non-state parties to the convention, and no cases of such use among the 156 states parties. This shows that the Mine Ban Convention has established an international norm, and that the use of landmines is considered unacceptable, also by non-state parties.

The use of certain types of cluster munitions also leads to considerable and unacceptable human suffering. This was most recently demonstrated during the war in Lebanon in the summer of 2006. Countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia are also severely affected.

Until just a few years ago, reaching agreement on an international ban on cluster munitions seemed impossible. In order to speed up progress on this issue, the Government took the initiative in the autumn of 2006 to launch an international negotiation process aimed at concluding a ban on the use, production and transfer of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable humanitarian harm. This was the start of the Oslo Process for a ban on cluster munitions, in which 130 countries are now involved. The aim is to conclude a convention on cluster munitions in the course of 2008.

A number of countries that have large stockpiles of cluster munitions are not participating in the Oslo Process. These include Russia, the US, China and Pakistan. These countries are, however, participating within the framework of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). Like many other countries, Norway is participating in both the Oslo Process and in the CCW, and considers these processes to be complementary. In the Government's view, it is positive that countries that are unable to participate in the Oslo Process nevertheless recognise the need to address this humanitarian problem by means of some regulatory framework they can adhere to.

Small arms are also a major humanitarian challenge. Most of the victims of wars, conflicts and terrorist actions are killed by small arms, which range from simple pistols and guns to shells and rocket launchers. It is estimated that between 300 000 and 500 000 people are killed by such weapons each year.

The result of the lack of adequate control of the production of, and trade in, small arms is that more conflicts develop into wars and that wars are more violent and last longer. On the African continent, child soldiers are a particular challenge. Their main weapons are almost invariably small arms. Easy access to affordable small arms also contributes to organised crime and terrorism.

In 2001, the UN member states adopted the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. However, this programme is not binding under international law, and it has proved difficult to reach agreement on specific measures to prevent such illicit trade. Some countries are also concerned that binding international obligations as regards trade in small arms would undermine their national room for manoeuvre and military defence capability (see also fact box 2.4).

Within the UN, preparatory work is being carried out on a treaty regulating international trade in all types of conventional weapons. A large majority of UN member states have agreed to start negotiations on such an agreement, and there is reason to hope that they will be launched in the course of 2009.

Box 2.4 The UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons

The most important global instrument for regulating the trade in, and use of, small arms is the UN's 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. According to this programme, member states are to improve national legislation and enhance international cooperation aimed at preventing illicit trade in small arms. A number of regional organisations are involved in efforts to prevent the proliferation of illicit small arms, particularly in Latin America, West Africa and Southern Africa. Efforts are increasingly focused on practical measures such as the exchange of information, police and border cooperation, training, and destruction of collected small arms. Norway is a major contributor to a number of measures and projects in this field.

3 Objectives, priorities and measures

3.1 Main objectives

All states have the right to safeguard their security, if necessary by means of military force. It is, however, essential that their efforts to safeguard their own security do not at the same time undermine the security of other states.

Arms control and disarmament are key elements of security policy. The lowest possible level of armament, combined with transparency and verification mechanisms, will provide increased security for all, and also make resources available that can be used for economic and social development. Efforts to promote arms control and disarmament are thus at the same time efforts to increase security, both our own and that of other countries, and promote human development.

The Government has three main objectives for its arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

First, we will seek to ensure security at the lowest possible level of armament through agreements that are binding under international law. Our aim is that, to the extent possible, our own and other states' security should be safeguarded by means of binding international cooperation, and that military force should not play a greater role than strictly necessary.

Second, we will work to ensure a world free of weapons of mass destruction. A world without nuclear, chemical and biological weapons would be a safer world. Getting there will require binding and verifiable agreements that involve all countries. It is clear that it will take time to reach this objective. It is therefore all the more important to get under way with new, future-oriented measures.

Third, we will work to eliminate weapons that cause unacceptable humanitarian suffering. War always leads to suffering, and every effort must be made to prevent armed conflict. But once war has broken out, human suffering must be minimised as far as possible, both among combatants and among the civilian population.

There are already restrictions on the production and use of a whole range of weapons and ammunition. But there are several more types of weapons that cause unacceptable humanitarian suffering. These include anti-vehicle mines, small arms and light weapons, and certain types of cluster munitions. In this connection, the efforts to reach agreement on a new convention on cluster munitions are of great importance.

3.2 Main priorities and measures

International cooperation on disarmament

Norway is working, through a number of global and regional forums, to ensure the highest possible level of security at the lowest possible level of armament. In all of these forums we have to cooperate with others and build alliances in order to gain acceptance for our views. The composition of these alliances will of course vary from issue to issue.

The Government attaches particular importance to close cooperation with our allies in NATO, the EU, the other Nordic countries and other like-minded countries. To an increasing degree, we are seeing that it can be useful to cooperate more closely with countries that belong to other regional or political constellations. We are doing this for example through the Seven-Nation Initiative on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and through the Oslo Process for an international ban on cluster munitions.

a) Global efforts

Global arms control and disarmament efforts are mainly conducted through the UN. The UN is without doubt the world's most important normative organisation. This applies to arms control and disarmament as well. We should therefore place great emphasis on strengthening the UN's role as regards both norms and the implementation of specific measures in this area.

Global disarmament and non-proliferation agreements such as the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) are binding under international law, and together they constitute a corner-

stone of the international security architecture. They are also, together with the Red Cross conventions, important normative agreements for the rules of war.

Compliance with the NPT, the BTWC and the CWC is a prerequisite for access to certain types of goods and technologies. This is particularly important for countries that have limited national capacity in these areas. Norway therefore provides technical and financial support to a number of developing countries to help them to fulfil their national obligations under these three agreements. The Government intends to continue providing this support.

Efforts to consolidate and further strengthen the NPT, the BTWC and the CWC are a priority task for the Government. We are seeking to achieve this by advocating that as many countries as possible accede to the agreements and by working to raise the threshold for withdrawing from them.

We regularly stress the importance of prompt accession in our dialogue with countries that are not yet party to these agreements, some of which are close development partners.

Norway is working to ensure that the obligations set out in these agreements are fulfilled. We are doing this, for example, by helping to develop mechanisms that allow inspections to be carried out to investigate any suspected violations of treaty obligations (for example under the CWC).

Furthermore, Norway is actively advocating that the IAEA be provided with the necessary resources and that the member states agree on the legal basis needed to enable the organisation to carry out credible inspections to investigate well-founded suspicions that the rules have been breached.

In recent years the normative function of the UN has shifted somewhat from the General Assembly to the Security Council, which under Article 26 of the UN Charter also has a mandate in the area of arms control. This trend is, among other things, due to the fact that the resolutions adopted by the UN General Assembly are not as binding as those adopted by the Security Council.

During its chairmanship of the UN First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) in 2006, Norway's main priority was to improve the efficiency of the committee's working procedures. We gained acceptance for proposals aimed at keeping debates more focused and at granting civil society significantly better access to the meetings. The number of "ritual" resolutions that are presented each year has also been reduced.

Box 3.1 Security Council resolution 1540

Security Council resolution 1540, which was unanimously adopted on 28 April 2004, requires all states to refrain from providing any form of support to non-state actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery. It also requires member states to adopt and enforce appropriate, effective laws that prohibit non-state actors from engaging in such activities. The resolution also provides for the establishment of a committee consisting of all the 15 countries that are members of the Security Council to report on the implementation of the provisions of the resolution. The mandate for the 1540 Committee is renewed for periods of two years. Norway is actively promoting effective implementation of resolution 1540.

However, there is still a long way to go before the UN General Assembly will be able to play the key role originally envisaged for it in the area of disarmament. Norway will therefore continue its efforts to make the First Committee more relevant and better able to address current and future security challenges.

Security Council resolution 1540 on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a concrete illustration of the Security Council's efforts in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. The resolution requires member states to implement and report on national measures needed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and materials that can be used for the development of such weapons (see also fact box 3.1).

Other examples of the Security Council's efforts in this area are the resolutions on Iran and North Korea, which impose selective sanctions against these two countries because they have breached their obligations under international law.

Certain countries, particularly within the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), are sceptical about the Security Council's increasing focus on disarmament and non-proliferation because they are concerned the role of the UN General Assembly will be further weakened.

Norway understands this concern, although we do not wish to diminish the authority of the Security Council. We have made it clear that the

General Assembly can best regain its authority by reaching agreement on specific disarmament and non-proliferation measures.

The Government considers it important that the Security Council engages in arms control issues, because such issues can be vital to maintaining international peace and security, which is the Council's main task. We would like to see the disarmament dimension be given more visibility in the Council's efforts.

Norway will continue to provide technical and financial support to developing countries that lack the necessary resources to effectively implement Security Council resolutions.

The UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) was established in 1978 and is a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly. The commission was intended as a forum for intergovernmental discussions on challenges related to arms control and for creating the broadest possible consensus on how these challenges could be addressed.

In recent years, UNDC has been paralysed due to disagreement between influential countries. In the UN General Assembly Norway has called for a thorough and critical review of UNDC's working methods.

One of the main tasks of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is to ensure that the NPT states fulfil their non-proliferation obligations in accordance with the treaty. This can be done in several ways, for example by means of inspections and verification of nuclear installations and processes in the respective countries. To do this, the IAEA needs to have access to the necessary information, be able to undertake thorough investigations in the country being inspected, and – not least – have sufficient resources to carry out credible analyses of the collected data.

Securing political and financial support for the IAEA was one of Norway's main tasks when it had a seat on the IAEA Board of Governors from 2005 to 2007. The IAEA has on several occasions proved to be a staunch defender of impartial and factual investigation, and this was clearly demonstrated ahead of the Iraq War in 2004, when the IAEA requested more time to allow the weapons inspectors to conclude their work. In 2005, the IAEA and its Director General, Dr Mohamed ElBaradei, were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their work.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is formally independent of the UN, but is financed by the organisation. Unlike the UN General Assembly and UNDC, the CD only has 66 member states. Norway has been a member since 1996.

Both the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) were negotiated within the framework of the CD. Like UNDC, the CD has been paralysed during the past decade due to disagreement about which disarmament challenges are the most urgent.

Norway has actively advocated that the CD be made more focused and action-oriented. This was illustrated by the fact that during its presidency in 2004, Norway sought to promote a substantive debate on the issues on the agenda.

Norway has played a leading role in the development and implementation of the Mine Ban Convention. The convention's secretariat is small, and this requires the active participation of the states parties to ensure effective implementation of the convention. However, landmines are still a considerable humanitarian problem in many countries. The Government will therefore, within the framework of the Mine Ban Convention, continue to provide assistance for mine clearance and mine victims, both politically and financially. The convention is improving the lives of millions of people. It is also an example of how small and medium-sized states can, through cross-regional cooperation and partnerships with humanitarian organisations, create new law and contribute to developing the international legal order.

The Government's initiative for an international ban on cluster munitions that cause unacceptable humanitarian harm is a natural continuation of Norway's engagement in the landmine issue. In the Oslo Process, affected countries, producer and consumer countries, UN humanitarian and development organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other parts of the Red Cross movement and a number of national and international humanitarian organisations have joined forces to put in place an agreement that prohibits all use, production, stockpiling and transfer of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable humanitarian harm. The agreement will also establish a framework for international cooperation on the destruction of stockpiles, clearance of affected areas and assistance to victims.

The Government will continue its efforts to keep the issue of small arms high on the international disarmament agenda. Here we cooperate closely with the UN, likeminded countries, regional organisations and NGOs.

One of the main tasks is to promote the implementation of practical measures under the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. It is important to demon-

strate that normative policies must be combined with operational measures in order to put an end to crime related to the arms trade.

b) Regional efforts

Regional disarmament efforts can often supplement and support global arms control and disarmament efforts. Norway's regional efforts are particularly concentrated in two organisations – the OSCE and NATO.

OSCE

The OSCE constitutes the formal multilateral framework for the implementation of the 1999 Vienna Document, the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) and the Open Skies (OS) Treaty, although in the case of Norway and other NATO members, much of the work related to the CFE Treaty takes place within the NATO framework. The OSCE is also helping to ensure implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, for example Security Council resolution 1540, by its members.

The Government will continue its efforts in the OSCE to consolidate and if possible strengthen the Vienna Document and the OS Treaty. In these efforts we cooperate closely with the other Nordic countries, among others.

At present a revision of the Vienna Document is being negotiated. However, Russia's suspension of the CFE Treaty is making it difficult to reach agreement on this.

NATO

Ever since what is generally known as the Harmel Report was presented in 1967, NATO has based its policy on both deterrence and détente. Deterrence by maintaining standing forces and expressing an explicit willingness to use them to defend the member states. Détente by means of transparency, confidence-building measures and military restraint, arms control and disarmament.

The Government will work actively to ensure that Russia resumes its participation in the CFE Treaty so that we once again have guarantees as regards conventional arms control and disarmament in Europe, including in our neighbouring areas. These efforts will take place partly within NATO, partly in connection with consultations between NATO and Russia, and partly within the OSCE. The Government is also of the view that the NATO-Russia Council should be involved more actively in finding a solution that makes it possible to continue the CFE regime.

The NATO Allies have chosen to continue to fulfil their obligations under the CFE Treaty, also with respect to Russia, although Russia itself no longer provides information on its forces or allows inspections on its territory. This is to demonstrate the importance they attach to the treaty and to facilitate a continuation of the CFE regime as far as possible. This line was reaffirmed by the NATO Summit in Bucharest from 2 to 4 April 2008.

Although significant cuts have been made in nuclear arsenals in Europe, a large number of nuclear weapons still remain, particularly on the Russian side. Norway is of the opinion that there is room for further Russian reductions, and also considers it extremely important that no additional nuclear weapons are deployed in Europe.

An important task for Norway is therefore to work to ensure the continuation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), which led to the elimination of an entire class of Russian and US missiles from the European continent. Furthermore, it is important to advocate greater transparency on tactical nuclear weapons, with a view to further reducing these arsenals. It is also essential that the unilateral Nuclear Presidential Initiatives by the US and Russia in 1991 and 1992 are followed up and incorporated into a binding disarmament agreement based on transparency, verification and irreversibility.

In the summer of 2007, Norway, together with Germany, took an initiative to strengthen NATO's disarmament efforts. The aim was to consolidate and strengthen the NATO countries' commitment to disarmament through political statements from NATO summits and meetings at foreign minister and defence minister level. It was also proposed that NATO's subsidiary bodies should engage more systematically in disarmament control issues.

The Norwegian-German initiative has gained broad support, and the Bucharest Summit decided that NATO is to continue to contribute to international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. The Government will continue to actively advocate that disarmament and non-proliferation issues should be reflected in NATO's ongoing activities, both internally in the organisation and in relation to partner countries and international organisations.

NATO's strategic concept from 1999 reaffirms the role of nuclear weapons in the Alliance, although their importance was significantly toned down compared with earlier NATO concepts. Norway has actively advocated that NATO should seek to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in interna-

tional politics, in line with the Government's policy platform. Our aim is the total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

c. Cooperation with selected countries

Norway is also engaged in disarmament and arms control efforts outside the UN and the regional organisations. Our cooperation with likeminded countries is aimed at accelerating processes in these organisations by developing proposals that are capable of gaining broad support, bridging deadlocks, counteracting counterproductive polarisation and contributing positively to global disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

The Norwegian-led Seven-Nation Initiative on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which in addition to Norway involves Australia, Chile, Indonesia, Romania, South Africa and the UK, plays a key role here.

The Seven-Nation Initiative was launched between the unsuccessful 2005 NPT Review Conference and the UN Summit later the same year. This cooperation aimed at facilitating global consensus on arms control issues at the UN Summit.

The foreign ministers of the seven countries agreed on a political declaration that both proposed robust non-proliferation measures and held out the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. It was very significant that the UK, a nuclear power, and key non-aligned countries such as Indonesia and South Africa endorsed this declaration.

The Seven-Nation Initiative soon gained broad support, but a small group of countries blocked the inclusion of a general call for disarmament and non-proliferation in the 2005 World Summit outcome document. However, Kofi Annan, the then UN Secretary-General, encouraged Norway to continue the Seven-Nation Initiative, as did IAEA Director General Mohamed ElBaradei. After taking office in October 2005, the Government decided to continue its efforts on this initiative.

The members of the Seven-Nation Initiative agreed to continue their cooperation, although some of the countries underlined that their affiliation with their respective regional and political groups would remain unchanged. For Norway this was no disadvantage, in fact if anything an advantage. Keeping alive cooperation between countries that generally have very different views on disarmament has value in itself.

Since 2005, the Seven-Nation Initiative has followed two main tracks. One of these is to support measures designed to assist countries in fulfilling their non-proliferation obligations according to the NPT and Security Council resolution 1540, which set out clear rules for the development and enforcement of national legislation on the protection of sensitive materials, the establishment of criminal penalties, and border and export controls.

The other track has been to develop proposals for new non-proliferation measures and recommendations aimed at building new momentum in nuclear disarmament efforts that all parties could agree on. The Government will work to ensure that the Seven-Nations Initiative plays a key role in achieving concrete results at the next NPT Review Conference, which will be held in 2010.

In connection with the Seven-Nations Initiative, Norway has established cooperation with research institutions in the seven countries and in the US, as well as with the UN system. The strength of this cooperation, which over time has grown into a network, was demonstrated during the international conference on nuclear disarmament hosted by Norway in Oslo in February this year. The US-based Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) and the Hoover Institution were important cooperation partners for the event. They were represented by former senator Sam Nunn, who is co-chairman and CEO of NTI, and former US Secretary of State George Shultz, respectively. Their participation was a clear indication of the political importance of further nuclear disarmament.

The conference established basic principles for achieving the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. Among other things, the conference underlined the importance of political leadership, close cooperation with civil society and a focus on practical and feasible disarmament measures. It also emphasised that all countries, non-nuclear weapon states included, have a responsibility to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Furthermore, the conference underscored the need for greater transparency about existing nuclear arsenals.

The proposed practical measures aimed at boosting international disarmament efforts correspond closely to Norway's priorities. In addition to maintaining a robust non-proliferation regime, these priorities include substantially reducing existing arsenals, diminishing the importance of and emphasis on nuclear weapons in security policy, preventing a new arms race by continuing the moratorium on nuclear testing, and negotiating a ban on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes.

The Government will ensure that the results of the Oslo Conference are brought into the Seven-

Nation Initiative and other nuclear disarmament forums.

Norway also cooperates closely with likeminded NATO countries in the UN General Assembly and under the NPT. This is clearly illustrated by the joint working documents developed together with countries such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, Poland and Lithuania. The purpose is to demonstrate the NATO countries' willingness to deal with key disarmament policy issues related to the NPT review process. Norway also maintains close contact with countries such as Japan, New Zealand and Sweden on NPT matters.

Our NATO membership and participation in informal cooperation structures ensure that Norway can engage with influential countries in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. This is important if we are to have any chance of gaining acceptance and support for our views.

Norway has developed similar cooperation in other disarmament forums. The clearest example is the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). Here Norway, Japan, Australia, Canada, South Korea, Switzerland and New Zealand have formed an informal group, which played an important role in ensuring the positive outcome of the BTWC's Sixth Review Conference in 2006.

In the area of conventional weapons, Norway has played an active role in developing networks of likeminded countries across regional and political dividing lines. The Mine Ban Convention would not have come about were it not for the close cooperation between Norway, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Ireland, Jordan, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, South Africa and Thailand.

Similarly, the progress that has been made in the Oslo Process for a ban on cluster munitions, in both political and practical terms, is the result of close cooperation involving countries in all parts of the world and relevant humanitarian organisations both in and outside the UN.

In the time ahead, the Government will focus particularly on strengthening cooperation with likeminded countries. The composition of such groups will vary from case to case depending on what we believe will be most effective for achieving the goals we have set ourselves. We are ready to cooperate across traditional political boundaries if this can further our goals, but we also attach great importance to maintaining close contact with our allies. Experience has shown that it is important to involve selected countries from different groups to identify common frames of reference in order to find solutions to which all parties can agree.

d) Partnership with civil society

An important common feature of the Mine Ban Convention, the Oslo Process on cluster munitions and the Seven-Nation Initiative is the close cooperation with civil society, for example research institutions, aid organisations and other NGOs.

This cooperation also contributes to greater transparency and democracy, as arms control and disarmament historically have been closed to public scrutiny.

The Red Cross Movement and other NGOs played a proactive role in the process that led to the Mine Ban Convention. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997, publishes a report every year, in which sensitive issues related to the implementation of the provisions of the Mine Ban Convention by the respective countries are discussed. The fact that this report is published by an NGO, and is to a large extent based on the observations of independent observers, makes it easier to raise and discuss difficult issues.

In the debates on the Mine Ban Convention, representatives of civil society can participate on a par with states. It is however only the states that make decisions, as it is only they that can conclude binding agreements on behalf of all citizens.

Representatives of civil society, and particularly the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (which consists of more than 200 NGOs), often possess important knowledge, expertise and field experience. They also lend credibility to the process and help to mobilise support.

The Government also intends to continue its close contact with humanitarian and human rights organisations in its efforts to strengthen the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and in negotiating an international arms trade treaty.

A number of research institutions in the US, in Norway and in the other countries that are part of the Seven-Nation Initiative have been commissioned to carry out analyses and make recommendations that can provide a boost in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. Regular coordination meetings are held with these institutions to get their input and ensure that their efforts are targeted as precisely as possible.

As a spin-off from the Seven-Nation Initiative, Norwegian researchers at the Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority, the Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and the Institute for Energy Technology have developed a network that has valuable expertise in the area of disarmament and

non-proliferation. This Norwegian network has developed promising cooperation with authorities and research institutions in the UK in areas such as the verification of nuclear disarmament.

Cooperation with civil society can take many different forms. One example is the cooperation with Det Norske Veritas (DNV) on the development of biosafety and biosecurity management systems. DNV has developed biosafety guidelines and is currently providing assistance to a laboratory in Indonesia. The experience gained from this project will be of use in other developing countries, and it will also be an important input to the efforts to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

The Norwegian authorities intend to strengthen their cooperation with DNV on nuclear safety and security, an area in which DNV already has acquired considerable expertise. DNV also has a large network covering a number of countries due to its longstanding commitment to promoting safety and security.

The Norwegian authorities are also cooperating closely with international actors such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other international networks to promote Norwegian priorities. The ICRC is an important actor in connection with the Oslo Process on cluster munitions, the Mine Ban Convention and, not least, in the area of biological and chemical weapons. Norway is also supporting the international Bioweapons Prevention Project, aimed among other things at promoting accession to and implementation of the BTWC in African countries.

The Government is concerned to ensure the broadest possible engagement in disarmament policy matters. This was demonstrated by the fact that civil society was granted far easier access to the UN General Assembly during Norway's chairmanship of the First Committee in 2006.

Furthermore, Norway has supported the launching of international projects aimed at building knowledge about disarmament and non-proliferation and increasing understanding of their importance. The Government has also strengthened its contact with Norwegian NGOs. However, this does not necessarily mean that our assessments and views coincide. However, dialogue is important in order to find the best solutions.

In order to ensure diversity and public engagement in disarmament and non-proliferation matters, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides project support to NGOs such as No to Nuclear Weapons and the Norwegian Peace Association. The Government will continue to intensify its cooperation with civil society in the time ahead.

Considerable funds are also being spent on strengthening research and promoting knowledge about and insight into disarmament and non-proliferation matters. The Government has allocated NOK 20 million for civil society activities in this area in 2008. This support has a clear development profile. It is the Government's intention to increase this support in the years to come.

3.3 A world free of weapons of mass destruction

a) Nuclear weapons

Nuclear weapons are weapons of mass destruction, which also include biological and chemical weapons.

A number of things must be put in place in order to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Apart from reducing existing arsenals, it is essential to prevent a new arms race. Another fundamental requirement is that a watertight non-proliferation regime is established. The total elimination of all nuclear weapons requires that all countries are confident that other countries are not secretly developing such weapons.

A further element on the road to a world free of nuclear weapons is the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Norway does not produce nuclear energy, partly for environmental reasons. Other countries have assessed this issue differently. These include many developing countries that see nuclear power as an important and non-polluting source of energy. In any case, it is necessary to acknowledge that increasing use of nuclear power for civilian purposes poses additional proliferation challenges that the international community must deal with.

The conclusion of the NPT in 1968 was made possible by a compromise between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states. The essence of the agreement is that countries that had not acquired nuclear weapons before 1967 undertake not to acquire such weapons. In return, they are given the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and the five recognised nuclear-weapon-states undertake to disarm. There has, however, been disagreement about the relative importance of each of these three pillars ever since the treaty entered into force in 1970.

The nuclear-weapon states contend that the danger of proliferation is the main challenge today. They claim that major nuclear reductions cannot

be made as long as serious security challenges such as Iran and North Korea remain unresolved and a credible non-proliferation regime has not yet been established.

The countries of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), on the other hand, underline that the nuclear-weapon states are not fulfilling their disarmament obligations. They claim that the process of reducing nuclear weapon arsenals has come to a halt at the same time as new weapons and doctrines are being developed. They also point out that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has still not entered into force, nearly 12 years after it was concluded.

Some NAM countries are therefore reluctant to participate in necessary non-proliferation measures until new progress is made in the area of disarmament. There are also those who claim that some of the non-proliferation measures, such as export control and attempts to prevent new countries from acquiring the capacity to produce nuclear fuel, are undermining developing countries' right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Non-proliferation is thus pitted against development.

For several years, the NAM countries have also been advocating the prompt negotiation of a new convention banning nuclear weapons. A number of countries oppose this, arguing that such negotiations would not result in an agreement, and that they could undermine the NPT. The Government is of the opinion that, as before, the most important task is to get the NPT countries to fulfil their disarmament and non-proliferation obligations.

In the Government's view, both disarmament and non-proliferation are important in order to eliminate and prevent access to weapons of mass destruction. It is, however, important to avoid reinforcing the impression that a robust non-proliferation regime has any other purpose than preventing new countries or terrorist groups from acquiring nuclear weapons.

The Government therefore considers it important to take a coherent and balanced approach, in which disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. A balanced approach entails following up all NPT obligations. Necessary non-proliferation measures must therefore be implemented. We also need to make further progress on disarmament, both because it is important in itself and because it is required in order to ensure necessary support for non-proliferation measures.

Thus, a coherent approach includes a number of steps that are mutually reinforcing, where some of the measures involved are more easily implemented than others.

In its efforts to promote nuclear disarmament, the Government will place particular emphasis on further reduction of existing arsenals. As a first step, the bilateral US–Russian START and SORT disarmament treaties need to be replaced by new binding agreements on further cuts in strategic nuclear arsenals.

These reductions must be irrevocable, internationally transparent and verifiable. Verification is essential if the international community is to feel confident that the reductions are actually taking place and will not be reversed at a later stage. Norway has stressed this point in all forums where this issue is discussed.

Furthermore, it is necessary to facilitate further reductions in stockpiles of tactical nuclear weapons with the long-term goal of eliminating them. Weapons deployed in Europe pose the greatest challenge in this respect. This issue needs to be addressed primarily by the NATO-Russia Council.

As the largest nuclear-weapon states by far, the US and Russia must lead the way as regards reductions. However, Norway will clearly express the view that other nuclear-weapon states have an independent responsibility to disarm and ensure transparency. We intend to voice this view both in disarmament forums and in our bilateral contact with the states in question.

China's nuclear arsenal is significantly smaller than the US and Russian arsenals. According to China's nuclear doctrine, the country will only use nuclear weapons to respond to a nuclear attack ("no-first-use doctrine"). On the other hand, developments indicate that China aims to upgrade and modernise its strategic nuclear retaliation capacity. Unlike the other established nuclear-weapon states, China has not introduced a unilateral moratorium on the production of fissile material, and has so far obstructed the launch of negotiations on a binding international moratorium. China has not ratified the CTBT yet either.

In addition to achieving quantitative reductions, it is essential to prevent a new nuclear arms race. Here, the Government emphasises three points.

First, it is necessary to ensure that the CTBT enters into force as soon as possible, so that a binding international prohibition on the development of new weapons is in place. The Government will intensify Norway's efforts to achieve this by raising this issue on a regular basis in its contact with countries that have not ratified the treaty. We will also continue to support research in this area.

Second, it is necessary to conclude a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) soon. The Government's aim is that Norway should actively advocate that an FMCT contain provisions on verification and ensure that, as far as possible, the treaty leads to reductions in existing stockpiles of fissile weapons-grade material, not just to a ban on future production.

Until an FMCT is concluded, it is encouraging that some nuclear-weapon states are converting their military stockpiles of fissile material for civilian use under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This type of disarmament clearly supports the right to make use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

Third, the nuclear-weapon states must show willingness to reduce the importance of nuclear weapons in their defence and security policies. Norway has cautioned against the development of new types of nuclear weapons. This is another issue Norway intends to pursue in NATO.

Reducing the importance of nuclear weapons must also include de-alerting nuclear weapons and refraining from threatening to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states. This would limit the role of nuclear weapons to deterrence between nuclear-weapon states. Norway supports such negative security guarantees.

Regional nuclear-weapon-free zones guaranteed by the nuclear-weapon states and based on agreement in the UN are important means of extending negative security guarantees. Norway is an active proponent of such zones, particularly in regions where there is a real proliferation risk, such as the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula. Nuclear-weapon-free zones are also important for disarmament.

The Government is supporting a project led by a South African institute aimed at achieving the necessary number of ratifications by African countries for the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (the Pelindaba Treaty) to enter into force. Norway is also supporting research carried out by a number of well-known institutions designed to boost efforts to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

A robust international non-proliferation regime is essential for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This will require closing current loopholes in the non-proliferation regime. Existing nuclear material must be secured, and assistance must be provided to countries that have trouble implementing their non-proliferation obligations due to limited resources. The Government will continue to contribute in these areas, both politically and financially.

The Government will also seek to facilitate a negotiated political solution to the dispute over Iran's nuclear activities and to ensure the complete dismantling of North Korea's nuclear weapons programme.

The Government considers it important that the IAEA plays a key role in monitoring these processes. In the Government's view, it is now mainly up to Iran and North Korea to demonstrate the necessary will to reach negotiated political solutions. Until that happens, Norway will help to maintain and, if necessary, increase political pressure on these two countries.

The lessons learned in connection with Iran and North Korea illustrate that it is necessary to develop arrangements that provide incentives for fulfilling non-proliferation obligations and tighten the sanctions against countries that attempt to withdraw from the NPT regime.

The Government will seek to ensure that the threshold for withdrawing from the NPT is raised even higher. It will also advocate that the IAEA be given the necessary tools to verify that nuclear activities in non-nuclear-weapon states are of an exclusively civilian nature.

It is vital to ensure that the IAEA has the necessary resources to carry out its verification tasks. This applies primarily to financial resources, but it is also important to ensure that it has the opportunity to cooperate with laboratories in the organisation's member states. Norway will work to make this happen. The Government will seek to ensure that the Strengthened Safeguards System is made mandatory for all states, and that nuclear-weapon states are also required to accept full IAEA verification of all civilian nuclear programmes.

Effective measures must be implemented to ensure that sensitive nuclear material does not fall into the wrong hands. In recent years, Norway has actively advocated that civilian nuclear facilities such as research reactors stop using highly enriched uranium (HEU) as nuclear fuel.

In June 2006, Norway, together with the IAEA, held an international conference in Oslo to mobilise support for measures to restrict the use of HEU in the civilian sector. The Government will continue these efforts in close cooperation with the IAEA.

The Government will work for universal ratification of the UN Nuclear Terrorism Convention and the amended IAEA Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material.

Box 3.2 Nuclear safety cooperation with Russia

Norway supports a number of concrete measures that promote disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Our major effort in this respect is nuclear safety cooperation with Russia. Since 1995, Norway has provided some NOK 1.3 billion for nuclear safety projects, mainly in northwestern Russia. The main priorities have been measures to prevent accidents at Russian nuclear power plants and to ensure safe handling and storage of radioactive material and spent nuclear fuel.

The right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is indisputable, although Norway and many other countries are concerned, for example, about the associated environmental problems. Increasing use of civilian nuclear power entails an additional proliferation risk, as the technology involved can also be used in the production of nuclear weapons. Norway will therefore continue to promote the introduction of credible and verifiable international arrangements for the supply of nuclear fuel and safe arrangements for the return of spent fuel.

Norway is also supporting efforts to ensure that all countries establish necessary national legislation to prevent nuclear material from falling into the wrong hands, protect nuclear facilities and ensure that effective enforcement mechanisms are developed to deal with violations of these provisions. Norway is doing this by supporting existing export control regimes and cooperation projects with individual countries under the auspices of the IAEA.

The Government will continue Norway's commitment to other non-proliferation initiatives such as the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the EU strategy in the same area, the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GI).

The implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a key element in international non-proliferation efforts. Norway will continue its efforts to get developing countries to implement the resolution, and will encourage them to see it as a tool for improving their image as attractive and reliable trading partners, which in turn will give them access to goods and technology that will facilitate economic and social progress.

b. Other weapons of mass destruction and means of delivery

Biological and chemical weapons have for a long time been considered to be inhumane warfare agents, and as early as in 1925, a prohibition against the first use of such weapons was established (the Geneva Protocol of 1925).

In 1972, agreement was reached on introducing a total ban on the production of, stockpiling of, and trade in, biological material for military purposes. However, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), which entered into force in 1975, has inherent flaws. For example, the convention lacks mechanisms to ensure that the states parties actually fulfil their obligations.

It is also a problem that more than 40 countries have not yet joined this convention. These are mainly developing countries. As a result, they may face restrictions as regards access to biotechnology, and may miss out on some of the benefits made available by advances in biological science.

In recent years, biological warfare agents have only been used to a limited extent. Today such weapons are considered to be of little military utility, but this could change in the light of advances in biological science and biotechnology, which may open up dangerous opportunities for using diseases as weapons.

The prospects of terrorist groups getting hold of dangerous biological material are particularly frightening. In many cases it may also be difficult to determine whether biological warfare agents have been used, as the effects may not be as immediate as those of nuclear or chemical weapons. The Government will work to promote universal ratification of the BTWC, and Norway has raised this matter with all the countries that have not joined the convention.

The Government will also continue to assist developing countries that lack the necessary resources to fulfil their obligations under the convention. This is closely linked with the efforts to ensure universal ratification of the BTWC, as many developing countries choose to remain outside the convention because they are afraid they lack the necessary resources and administrative capacity to take on new treaty obligations. Norway's efforts include providing support for a project aimed at encouraging African countries to join the BTWC.

Norway is also working to ensure that adequate control and verification schemes for the

BTWC are established, and that researchers and others truly comprehend the dangers associated with the misuse of biological science. We are also seeking to focus attention on biosafety and biosecurity with a view to preventing dangerous material from falling into the wrong hands, both in the BTWC and in other relevant forums. Norway has also actively supported the International Committee of the Red Cross' Appeal on Biotechnology, Weapons and Humanity, in which it warns of the dangers associated with the misuse of biological science.

Furthermore, the Government will promote the development of response mechanisms, particularly in the health sector, that can be used in cases where it is suspected that biological weapons have been employed.

Norway also supports the development of a UN mechanism designed to investigate cases where it is suspected that biological weapons have been used. In this connection, Norway has stressed that good national health care systems constitute the first line of defence against the spread of dangerous diseases. The health sector is a key priority area in Norwegian development policy. Response mechanisms designed to deal with suspicious outbreaks of disease must be integrated into existing health care structures.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which entered into force in 1997, has an extensive verification regime and its own technical secretariat. Although the CWC is considered to be the most robust of the arms control agreements, it is facing challenges due the fact that both the US and Russia are behind schedule as regards destroying their stockpiles of chemical weapons in accordance with their obligations under the convention.

In this connection, Norway has provided support totalling NOK 21 million for a UK-led destruction project in Russia within the framework of the G8 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

The convention is also facing a number of other challenges. Many developing countries have failed to develop national legislation for the implementation of their CWC obligations. It has also proved impossible to reach agreement to further develop inspection schemes to deal with suspected violations of the provisions of the CWC.

The Government will continue its efforts to ensure that the destruction obligations set out in the CWC are fulfilled within the deadlines specified in the convention. The assistance provided by Norway for destruction in Russia is a concrete contribution in this respect.

Finally, the Government will seek to ensure full national fulfilment of CWC obligations by advocating that all parties to the convention report on their national legislation aimed at preventing hazardous chemicals from falling into the wrong hands. So far, 40 countries have failed to submit such reports. Norway intends to assist African countries in particular with this task.

Although extensive inspection schemes have been established under the CWC, there is still room for improvement. An important area is that of "challenge inspections", i.e. an effective inspection scheme for dealing with suspicions of illegal production of chemical warfare agents. Norway, together with the EU and others, is actively working to strengthen this aspect of the convention's inspection regime.

3.4 Ban on conventional weapons that cause unacceptable humanitarian harm

Since the end of the Cold War, there has been increasing focus on weapons and weapons systems that affect civilians in an indiscriminate and unacceptable manner. Ten years ago, attention was focused mainly on the humanitarian and development-related challenges posed by anti-personnel mines. Efforts in this field led to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer or Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Mine Ban Convention), which was adopted in Oslo in 1997.

Norway will continue to actively promote and facilitate the fulfilment by all states parties of their obligations under the Mine Ban Convention. The convention is a key instrument for both disarmament and humanitarian efforts. It prevents human suffering and ensures assistance for many landmine victims.

At the same time, the Government will continue to be an active promoter of humanitarian disarmament through the Oslo Process for a ban on cluster munitions that cause unacceptable humanitarian harm. Our aim is to conclude and sign such an agreement in the course of 2008.

The Government also supports the efforts to regulate the use of cluster munitions within the framework of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW), and considers these to be complementary processes. The mandate for the CCW negotiations is less binding than the goals set out for the Oslo Process. However, the fact that the major producers, users and exporters of cluster

munitions participate in the CCW process make this forum valuable.

The Oslo Process could help to get the countries involved in the CCW process to accept an agreement that goes as far as possible in regulating the use of cluster munitions.

The Government will continue its active efforts to ensure that small arms stay high on the global arms control agenda. In these efforts we will seek alliances with likeminded countries, civil society actors, UN agencies and regional organisations.

By means of practical measures within the framework of the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, Norway aims to demonstrate that in efforts to prevent arms-related crime, normative policy goes hand in hand with operational activities. In 2008, Norway will provide NOK 14 million for practical measures in this field.

The Government will continue its efforts to facilitate an agreement that regulates trade in all types of conventional weapons. In this process it will maintain a close dialogue with NGOs and research institutions, among others.

Women and children are among the most vulnerable in conflict and war situations, and are often severely affected by the use of weapons. The Government sees its efforts to reduce the stockpiles and use of conventional weapons as an important contribution to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and to securing the rights of women and girls.

The Government will also continue its efforts to stop all use of child soldiers in armed conflicts.

Various types of weapons amnesties play a key role in facilitating the collection and destruction of conventional weapons in connection with conflict resolution. The Government considers such measures to be of great importance, not least for the reintegration of child soldiers into civilian life.

4 Conclusion

The Government recognises the serious disarmament challenges we are facing. If the negative trend is to be reversed, the countries that currently possess the largest nuclear arsenals must show leadership. The US and Russia still possess more than 90% of the world's nuclear weapons. These two countries must therefore lead the way.

At the same time, we must be realistic and acknowledge that the current threat picture is a lot more complex than before. Both new states and terrorist organisations are showing an interest in acquiring nuclear weapons. It is essential that we deal with these challenges as well. Our disarmament and non-proliferation efforts must therefore go hand in hand.

The challenges we are facing are extremely complex, and often touch on the key interests of a large number of countries. The Government will continue to make use of available opportunities to promote progress towards a world in which the security of countries is based more on international cooperation and international law, and less on fear and military power. The Government will also seek to further develop international humanitarian law with a view to reducing the humanitarian suffering caused by war and conflict.

The Government will continue and further strengthen Norway's active engagement in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation in accordance with the policy lines set out in this report to the Storting.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

r e c o m m e n d s

that the Recommendation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, dated 26 May 2008, relating to Disarmament and Non-proliferation be submitted to the Storting.

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