

HCoC ICC/Executive Secretariat

18th HCoC Annual Regular Meeting

Chairperson's Summary / Plenary Decisions

The ICC / Executive Secretariat herewith circulates the Chairperson's Summary / Plenary Decisions adopted unanimously by Subscribing States participating in the Eighteenth HCoC Annual Regular Meeting on 3 and 4 June 2019 in Vienna. The Summary also contains as annex the Press Release agreed upon during the meeting.

4 June 2019

ENCLOSURE

**18th REGULAR MEETING OF THE SUBSCRIBING STATES TO
THE HAGUE CODE OF CONDUCT AGAINST
BALLISTIC MISSILE PROLIFERATION**

VIENNA, 3 June – 4 June 2018

CHAIRPERSON'S SUMMARY/PLENARY DECISIONS

1. The Subscribing States to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, hereinafter referred to as the HCOC, held their 18th Regular Meeting from 3 June to 4 June 2019 at the Vienna International Centre.

2. The Chairperson of the HCOC, Ambassador Ann-Sofie Nilsson, Ambassador for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, inaugurated the meeting. The Chair started by sincerely thanking all Subscribing States for the confidence shown in Sweden during its Chairmanship and stated that the focus of the Swedish chairmanship was on reiterating that the proliferation of ballistic missiles continues to be a serious concern and that preventing this constitutes a very concrete contribution towards a safer world. During its Chairmanship, Sweden emphasised that adherence to the HCOC serves as a confidence building measure, which contributes to peace and security. The Chair encouraged subscribing States with launching capabilities to notify launches as early as possible and reminded everyone to submit their annual declarations. Sweden encouraged subscribing States to continue to define, review and further develop the workings of the Code. In this spirit, an extraordinary meeting was held in January this year. Sweden furthermore highlighted it had taken every opportunity to reach out to non-subscribing States. The Chair conducted a large number of exchanges in bilateral and multilateral forums. The issue had been brought up on a political and civil servant's level. With support from the EU, the chair, the ICC and the EEAS reached out to three regions over the course of the year together with the *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique* (FRS) as partners in these EU-funded support and outreach activities. The chair thanked the FRS for their support in strengthening the Code. The first seminar took place in the Caribbean region in November 2018, followed by South Asian seminar in January 2019 and a West African seminar in February 2019. The combination of both subscribing and non-Subscribing States provided for very useful information exchange. The Chair also conducted an expert mission to Kuala Lumpur to discuss the benefits of becoming a subscribing State.

Continuously, the chair has been in contact with a number of states that have been interested in joining the code and welcomed the Togolese Republic as the 140th state to join the Code. The Swedish chair highlighted the support from Subscribing States at the General Assembly in 2018. The chair also demarched a number of capitals and conducted dialogues in New York in order to increase the number of supporters and secure even stronger support in 2018 than 2016. The resolution received its highest number of supporters since its introduction in 2004.

3. Her Excellency, Ambassador Ann-Sofie Nilsson, Ambassador for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs handed over the Chairmanship of the 18th

Regular Meeting of the HCOC to Her Excellency, Ambassador Kjersti Andersen, Ambassador of Norway to Austria and Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna.

4. In her opening remarks, Ambassador Kjersti Andersen, Ambassador of Norway to Austria and Permanent Representative to the International Organizations in Vienna emphasised that the proliferation of ballistic missiles continues to be a serious challenge to international and regional peace and security and that in the current global context, the Code's value cannot be overestimated. Norway is planning on an active chairmanship, will focus on universalization of the code, is planning to follow up on states that have recently participated in outreach activities and also focus on Subscribing States that have moved positively in their voting on the biannual HCOC resolution. Furthermore, the chair plans to approach non-Subscribing States that are developing or possessing space launch vehicles or ballistic missile capabilities as well as all other states. Furthermore, encouraging further implementation of the code will also be a focus of the Norwegian Chairmanship, especially the Subscribing State's commitment to the timely submission of Annual Declarations and Pre-Launch Notifications. To expand the Code's relationship with the United Nations and other non-proliferation mechanisms such as the NPT will also be given special emphasis.

5. The Executive Secretariat/Immediate Central Contact (ES/ICC) provided an update on Pre-Launch Notifications (PLNs) and Annual Declarations (ADs) under the HCOC, underscoring that since the 17th Regular Meeting, 119 PLNs had been received by the ES/ICC and distributed to Subscribing States. The ES/ICC also noted that 85 ADs for 2018 had been submitted by Subscribing States by the beginning of the Regular Meeting compared to 82 the previous year. Subscribing States were reminded that the general deadline for ADs is the 31st of March of every year and that the e-ICC was the primary tool for distribution of all documents. To date, 96 countries have nominated e-ICC focal points and were thus able to submit national documents electronically. The remaining Subscribing States were invited to do likewise in order to have access to all relevant documents on-line. The EC/ICC further reminded Subscribing States that information about Focal Points was continuously updated. Furthermore, the ICC undertook outreach by participating and presenting at the three regional seminars organised by the Chair Sweden jointly with the EU and the *Fondation pour la recherche stratégique*.

6. During the General Debate, statements were delivered by Japan, Argentina, the Republic of Korea, Italy, Romania on behalf of the European Union, Romania, Chile, Kazakhstan, Switzerland, Costa Rica, Austria, Iraq, France, Canada, the Russian Federation, Colombia, Australia, Ukraine, Germany, the Philippines, the United States, India, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Sweden and Norway. Subscribing States agreed on the following:

- a. Welcomed the activities of the outgoing chair as well as the outlined programme of the incoming Chairmanship, the support of the Austrian government through the ES/ICC;
- b. Reaffirmed the importance of the HCoC as a unique confidence building and transparency instrument in the framework of multilateral efforts against ballistic missile proliferation;
- c. Emphasized the need to improve the implementation of the HCoC and ensure the fulfilment of transparency obligations as well as full implementation of the HCoC by all Subscribing States. Confidence-building and transparency measures can only be fully successful if Subscribing States entirely commit to the Code;
- d. Underlined the need to promote universalization of the HCoC, especially to countries with missile and space capabilities, and also by taking a regional approach. In this context, outreach efforts were considered important;

- e. Noted that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery continues to be a threat to international peace and security;
- f. Welcomed the eight resolutions on the HCOC adopted since 2004 by the United Nations General Assembly; and
- g. welcomed Togo's subscription to the Code shortly before the Meeting, as the 140th Subscribing State.

7. Japan reiterated that it was chair in 2013/14 and undertook outreach activities with a focus on Asian countries. Japan further reaffirmed its strong commitment to working with the international community in order to achieve complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all of North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Japan also called upon Subscribing States to submit Annual Declarations in a timely manner and noted that the implementation of the HCOC's confidence building measures does not serve as justification for the programs to which these measures apply, as stipulated in the Code.

8. Argentina encouraged all members to adhere to the provisions of the Code and highlighted the importance of universalization of the Code to enhance its reach. Argentina highlighted the importance of the notification system of the Code and suggested to work together in order to be able to achieve the highest possible number of Pre-Launch Notifications. All decisions adopted by Subscribing States should help achieve this goal in a practical way. Argentina suggested also that the inclusion of additional information in the Annual Declarations could serve as an additional confidence building measure. Argentina condemned the recent activities by the DPRK and called on the DPRK to end all acts running counter to numerous UNSC Resolutions, hostile acts and provocations, and to fully comply with obligation under international law.

9. The Republic of Korea emphasized the importance to provide the Annual Declarations and PLNs in a timely manner. The Republic of Korea welcomed DPRK's decision last year to stop intercontinental ballistic missile tests and to close nuclear test sites and expressed its willingness to continue its efforts to realize complete denuclearization and establishment of lasting peace on the Korean Peninsula based upon momentum created by three inter Korean and two US DPRK Summits. The Republic of Korea noted that the discussion around the criteria regarding PLN is a complex one and emphasized the need to focus on the timely submission of PLN.

10. Italy emphasised the significant role played by the HCOC as an important tool against the proliferation of ballistic missiles. Italy also pointed out that even if the HCOC is not aimed at limiting civilian space programmes and launching activities, circumstances may arise where ballistic missiles programmes or activities can contribute to military ballistic missiles proliferation. Regarding peaceful uses of missile technology in research and development activities in outer space, Italy was highly supportive of developing Transparency and Confidence Building Measures (TCBM's), such as the "Principles of Responsible Behaviour in Outer Space" and "Guidelines on the Long-Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities" and is in favour of an instrument that would cover the peaceful use of outer space as a political commitment. Italy also condemned the recent short range ballistic missile launches by the DPRK and called on the DPRK to return to compliance with relevant UNGA resolutions. Italy commended the high level efforts undertaken in order to ease tensions in the Korean

peninsula. In the context of strengthening the international non-proliferation architecture, Italy also emphasised that the JCPOA remains a key element and an important achievement in multilateral diplomacy. At the same time, Italy expressed grave concern about Iran's ballistic missile activity and called on Iran to refrain from these activities.

11. Romania acting as President of the Council of the European Union gave the floor to the representative of the EU who delivered the joint EU¹ statement. The EU emphasised that the HCOC is the only multilateral instrument aiming to both prevent ballistic missile proliferation and increasing transparency for the benefit of the Subscribers and reiterated its call for the full implementation of the Code by all Subscribers and called on Subscribing States to fully implement their commitment to exchange Pre-Launch Notifications on their ballistic missile and space launch vehicle launches and test flights. The EU stated its belief that further efforts are needed for the universalisation of the Code and called on all countries that have yet to do so, in particular those with ballistic missile capabilities, to subscribe to the Code. The EU welcomed the biennial UN General Assembly Resolution on HCoC, which was passed in 2018 by a new record high number of 171 votes. The EU stated that it had repeatedly noted that the Russian missile system raised serious concerns regarding Russian compliance with the INF Treaty and urged Russia to address these concerns in a substantial and transparent manner, as well as emphasising the continued need for full and verifiable compliance, dialogue and the taking of measures to preserve the treaty prior to its expiry. The EU stated it attaches the highest importance to the New START Treaty as a crucial contribution to international and European security. The EU therefore encouraged early and active dialogue on the future of the New START post-2021 and the potential new arms control arrangements between the US and Russia which is important to preserve strategic stability and lock in the achievements reached on nuclear disarmament beyond the existing Treaty. The EU expressed particular concerns about the development, testing and acquisition of ever more advanced ballistic missile capabilities in different regions of the world such as North East Asia and the Middle East and especially by the DPRK, Iran and Syria. Regarding the DPRK, the EU urged the DPRK to seize this historic opportunity and engage seriously in the negotiations with a view to abandoning its nuclear weapons programme as well as its delivery systems in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and achieving lasting peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. The EU noted with concern and condemned the recent short-range ballistic missile launches by the DPRK, which contravened United Nations Security Council resolutions and which undermined regional and international security and stability and therefore welcomed the US readiness to continue to support the negotiation process despite this setback. The European Union expressed its resolute commitment to the preservation and full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as a key achievement of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, which is in the security interest of all. The EU also reaffirmed its grave concern about Iran's ballistic missile activity. The EU further noted with concern, that since December 2012, the Syrian regime has launched hundreds of ballistic missiles, ranging from liquid-propelled and Scud-based missiles but also more accurate and more operational solid-propelled SRBMs.

12. Romania called for the Code's universalization in order to increase its effectiveness. Furthermore, Romania noted that the Code faces several challenges, like the participation at the working meetings, the submission of the Annual declarations by all states, the

¹ The following States aligned with the EU statement: North Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Andorra and San Marino.

universalization of the Code, as well as challenges from states outside the regime. It underlined that efforts should focus on responding to these challenges. Romania also emphasized that it shared the concerns already raised about recent ballistic missile activities undertaken by other states.

13. Chile emphasised that the HCOC continues to play an important role towards the non-proliferation of ballistic missiles. Chile reiterated that it continues to welcome proposals aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the Code, like the recent proposal from Germany and emphasised that one alternative would be to broaden the scope of the Code so as to include other means of delivery of Weapons of Mass Destruction, like the inclusion of cruise missiles. Chile would also welcome a closer cooperation between the HCOC and the United Nations.

14. Kazakhstan, as owner of the "Baikonur" space launch site, reported on its continued participation in peaceful space exploration programs together with Russia and other countries, and reiterated its support for the development of transparency and confidence building measures, like the political instrument proposed by the European Union. Kazakhstan further highlighted its wish, as NSG and Zangger Committee member, to be invited to the MTCR, Australia Group and Wassenaar Arrangement, pointing to recently improved national export controls and valuable contributions to the strengthening of global non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Kazakhstan emphasized that the Code should not limit the peaceful use of space technologies and highlighted the importance of expanding subscription to the Code as an essential element towards confidence-building.

15. Switzerland shared its concern about current trends in arms control and nonproliferation. It noted that the emergence of new technologies and actors poses new challenges, which need to be managed. Switzerland also noted that Europe is not immune to these developments and reiterated its regret about the likely demise of the INF treaty. The continuous growth of the HCoC, however, was described as an encouraging development. Furthermore, Switzerland noted that it was looking forward to taking over the chairmanship of the HCoC for the period 2020/2021.

16. Costa Rica reiterated that the HCOC was a highly valuable instrument in the international community's tool box for confidence building and transparency. Costa Rica emphasised the importance of a closer relationship between the Code and the United Nations. Furthermore, Costa Rica underscored the importance to redouble efforts in outreach activities and to promote the Code to gain new subscriptions, and furthermore highlighted the importance of timely submission of Annual Declarations and to provide PLNs as appropriate.

17. Austria emphasised the role of the HCOC as a valuable instrument for building confidence amongst Subscribing States and would welcome to increase outreach to non-subscribing states, especially in regions with particular proliferation and security challenges.

18. Iraq emphasised its commitment to the Code and emphasised that Iraq, in spite of the numerous and continuous challenges that the country has been facing, has not been saving any efforts to implement its obligations towards the treaties and codes related to the banning of weapons of mass destruction and its proliferation as well as its delivery systems, which includes the HCOC. Iraq further noted the necessity to further strengthen the HCOC and related disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms and establish a Middle East zone free from weapons of mass destruction as a fundamental step towards strengthening the security

and stability of the region. Iraq went on stating the need to have all the parties in the Middle East ratify, as soon as possible, the treaties and codes related to the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, as a first step to establish the free zone in the region.

19. France expressed its full support to the HCOC as the only multilateral transparency and confidence building instrument curbing the proliferation of ballistic missiles. France pointed to ballistic missile programmes of concern, especially the use and possession of ballistic missiles by non-state actors. On the DPRK, especially considering the recent launches, the necessity of continued sanctions implementation in order to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula was highlighted. France expressed continued support for the JCPOA on Iran's nuclear programme, while pointing at inconsistency of Iranian ballistic missile activities with UNSC resolution 2231 and also expressed its concerns regarding Iran's transfers of missiles and related technologies in the region. Also the case of Syria was discussed. Against this background, better implementation and universalization of the HCOC and support by the European Union and FRS to this end are particularly important. France furthermore emphasized that the implementation of TCBMs are of particular importance in today's security environment and that adhering to the code does not limit the right to free access to the exploitation of space for peaceful purposes. France also suggested that a closer relationship between the Code and the United Nations should be pursued.

20. Canada noted with concern the increase in the proliferation and launches of ballistic missiles in recent months. Regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Canada, condemned Pyongyang's decision to resume missile testing with launches of close and short-range ballistic missiles on May 4 and 9 and assessed that these ballistic missile tests violate multiple UN Security Council resolutions and that they are provocative and undermine efforts to peacefully resolve the DPRK nuclear issue. Canada further stated that the DPRK must avoid further destabilizing activities, continue dialogue and take concrete steps toward the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs. With regard to Iran, Canada noted that since the last regular meeting of the HCOC, Iran has continued to expand the capabilities of its ballistic missile program and has unveiled and tested a number of new missiles and has pledged to continue to do so. Canada condemned Iran's ballistic missile program and launches, which are destabilizing for the region and inconsistent with UNSCR 2231. Canada also condemned Iran's ongoing proliferation of arms including ballistic missiles and related technologies to both State and non-State actors and stated that it will continue to maintain sanctions aimed at Iran's ballistic missile program

21. The Russian Federation emphasized its support in making the Code more efficient and more effective for new Subscribing States. The Russian Federation noted with concern that the international community is confronted with less and less constraints to the development and use of ballistic missiles and further stressed, that the HCOC on its own cannot solve this problem, but is the first step to reaching this goal. The Russian Federation further underlined the lack of compliance with the Code, as is the case with the submission of Annual Declarations. With regard to the German proposal on which launches should be notified, the Russian Federation noted that it was open for discussing new measures to strengthen the Code, but felt that it would be premature to impose new commitments on the Subscribing States before we achieve full universalization of the Code and compliance with its provisions. It was also highlighted that that the Code should not be used to put pressure on individual

states. As a response to the statement made by the representative of the European Union, the Russian Federation noted that Iran remained in full compliance with UNSCR 2231. Russia stressed that by making unfounded statements regarding the Russia's implementation of the INF Treaty the EU abused its observer status in the HCOC.

22. Colombia highlighted the importance of the HCOC as the only multilateral instrument against ballistic missile proliferation and advocated the universalization and full implementation of the Code. Furthermore, Colombia recognized the German proposal as an important measure to enhance the effectiveness of the Code and invited Subscribing States to further discuss and propose ways to enhance the Code.

23. Australia expressed deep concern about the actions of the DPRK, in particular the continued testing of ballistic missile systems and called on the DPRK to abandon its ballistic missile programme in a complete and verifiable manner. Australia further commended the continued commitment of the United States and the Republic of Korea to continue inter-Korean discussions.

24. Ukraine noted its commitment towards the full abandonment of all nuclear weapons and the importance of the HCOC, the MTCR and the NPT in this regard. Furthermore, Ukraine noted its concern about the recent actions undertaken by the DPRK and considered the Russian Federation's breach of the INF Treaty as very concerning. Ukraine highlighted the HCOC's role as a good example for the prevention of ballistic missile proliferation and noted that in order to be fully effective, the universalisation of the Code remains important.

25. Germany noted with concern the likely demise of the INF treaty as a result of the Russian Federation's continued non-compliance and that it will have a negative impact upon European security as it undermines attempts to limit and reduce the role of nuclear-capable delivery systems in European security. On the DPRK, Germany re-emphasized that only by credibly embarking on the path to complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization can North Korea regain the trust of the international community. On Iran, Germany called on the country to strictly and fully comply with all provisions of UNSCR 2231. Germany urged Iran to refrain from ballistic missile activities inconsistent with UNSCR 2231 and to cease any transfers of arms, including missile technology, illicit under UNSCR 2231 and other relevant UNSC resolutions. Germany welcomed the high turnout at the informal expert meeting on 24 January and the valuable exchange of views. Germany noted that the PLN implementation rate for 2017 was 66.9%, and that according to its assessment this figure increased to 73.1% in 2018. Germany also reported that it had counted 74 launches of Non-Subscribing States in 2018, 29 ballistic missile launches and 43 space launches. Germany recalled that it had also shared a questionnaire as a basis to understanding the range of views on a possible common understanding of a PLN threshold and thanked the Subscribing States that have replied to the questionnaire, but noted that since only 15 answers to the questionnaire were received, Germany had to concede that at present, there is no consensus on whether and how a common understanding of a PLN threshold should be pursued. Germany emphasised further, that it continues to see added value in arriving at a common understanding by way of an open-ended discussion amongst Subscribing States and encouraged those Subscribing States who regularly conduct launches to communicate their respective national approach using their Annual Declarations in order to achieve a minimum of transparency in notifying practice. Germany

stressed that its initiative was by no means intended to change the text of the Code or render procedures more complicated.

Germany also shared its view, that there is merit to use other international fora such as COPUOS for promoting the Code's universalization.

26. The Philippines emphasised the importance of full and effective implementation and universalization of the HCOC as well as outreach activities, which are valuable towards achieving the goal of expanding the subscription of States to the HCOC.

27. The United States reported on outreach, both to Subscribing States, with regard to the submission of Annual Declarations, and non-subscribing states with regard to universalization. The US was supportive of enhanced exchange between the HCOC and the MTCR. The United States underscored that the proliferation of ballistic missiles constituted a serious threat to international peace and security, and noted that Iran, the DPRK, and Syria continued their attempts to acquire ballistic missile technology, equipment, and expertise and/or further develop existing programmes. With regard to Iran, the US stated that since the last regular meeting of the HCOC, Iran continued to expand its ballistic missile programmes and to engage in activities inconsistent with UNSC 2231. The US also emphasized the importance of preventing the transfer to and from Iran of all ballistic missile-related items and noted the importance of export control vigilance, especially with regard to Chinese serial proliferator Li Fangwei (aka Karl Lee). With regard to the DPRK, the US noted that the DPRK retains ballistic missiles and weapons of mass destruction and urged Subscribing States to fully implement all relevant UNSC Resolutions. The US also encouraged all HCOC Subscribing States to continue in their national and bilateral outreach efforts to promote universalization and to express concerns regarding ongoing missile proliferation. The US noted concern regarding the development of ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons by Pakistan outside the NPT. Furthermore, the United States noted that all States can contribute to international ballistic missile non-proliferation efforts by implementing and enforcing comprehensive strategic trade controls, including catch-all controls and controls on intangible technology transfers (ITT), transit, trans-shipment, and brokering and by harmonizing their national export controls according to UNSCR 1540 and MTCR standards. The US also suggested to do more than just establish national controls on paper, but to reach out to the industry and academia to ensure they clearly understand what avenues of trade require government authorization. On the German proposal, the US reminded Subscribing States of an agreement reached by Subscribing States in 2003 that there would be no formal clarifications on what missiles should be notified and that each country should explain its own approach in its national capacity. The US also reiterated its position not to expand the scope of the HCOC and urged the Chair to notify Subscribing States in advance of external outreach activities.

28. India emphasized its longstanding commitment to non-proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems and encouraged all Subscribing States to abide by their obligations under the HCOC and not to develop or assist in developing weapons of mass destruction in contravention with norms established under international disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms. In this regard, India is supportive of HCoC's efforts to universalise the Code. India would urge HCoC to continue its outreach efforts with not just those States that possess space launch and ballistic missile capabilities but also with those that do not possess such capabilities.'

29. The United Kingdom expressed deep concern about the DPRK's continued development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs as a real threat to international peace and security and condemned its recent missile launches in May. The UK emphasised that the DPRK must engage in meaningful discussion towards denuclearization and emphasised that the sanctions imposed on the DPRK must be enforced. The UK expressed serious concern regarding Iran's ballistic missile programme which is inconsistent with UNSCR 2231 and contributes to heightened regional tensions, and called for vigilance and the strict enforcement of the restrictions in accordance with that resolution. The UK also found the transfer of ballistic missile capabilities to non-state actors to be particularly alarming.

30. New Zealand reiterated its support for the HCOC and highlighted its national space legislation and its commitment to developing a safe, responsible, secure and sustainable space industry. New Zealand noted that since the last regular meeting of HCOC it has submitted six pre-launch notifications related to orbital launches by a private corporation. Furthermore, New Zealand expressed its view that the DPRK's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes threaten global security and it welcomed ongoing diplomatic efforts towards the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.

31. Sweden noted that it is important to encourage already Subscribing States to fulfil their obligations under the Code and that promoting implementation is not only a task for the Chair but for the whole membership. Sweden also encouraged states to support and inform those countries about the Code, that have voted in favour of the UNGA resolution several times but are not Subscribing States to the Code. Sweden further noted the importance of clarifying the link of the HCOC to export control regimes, such as the MTCR, or to the implementation of UNSC 1540 and upholding the proliferation related sanctions regimes not least against the DPRK to decrease regional tensions and by that help stabilise global security. In light of the growing threat from the proliferation of ballistic missiles and the fast development of new technologies, Sweden also encouraged the Subscribing States to use the provisions as included in the text of the Code to review and develop the instrument.

32. Norway expressed concern for the ballistic missile programmes of the DPRK and Iran and stated that a strong multilateral response is required to tackle these ballistic missile threats. Norway also highlighted the importance of the timely submission of Pre-Launch Notifications and Annual Declarations.

33. The Subscribing States agreed to issue a Press Release after the 18th Regular Meeting, in order to raise public awareness about the HCOC. The text of the Press Release is attached to the Chairperson's Summary as Annex.

34. In the course of discussing the Press Release, Romania acting as President of the Council of the European Union stated that it was surprised by Russia's unreasonable demand and effort to suppress international dialogue in important security issues relating to ballistic missiles, politicizing the issue of financial assistance for the promotion of the Code, in order to send "political signals" inside and outside the HCoC membership. It also emphasised that the EU will remain committed to continue promoting efforts to universalize the Code.

35. The Russian Federation stated that it was not the Russian Federations intention to politicize the discussions, but to strive to preserve the Code as the unique venue for respectful dialogue on transparency and confidence building measures in the sphere of missiles.

36. On 3 May 2019, the Chair has received the candidature of Switzerland for the chairmanship 2020 to 21. It was decided that Switzerland will serve as the Chair of the HCOC during the 19th Regular Meeting and for the period 2020 to 2021.

35. It was decided that the 19th Regular Meeting of the HCOC would be held in Vienna on 3 and 4 June 2019.

36. Under AOB, no further issues where raised by Subscribing States.

18TH REGULAR MEETING OF THE SUBSCRIBING STATES
TO THE HAGUE CODE OF CONDUCT AGAINST
BALLISTIC MISSILE PROLIFERATION

PRESS RELEASE BY HCoC SUBSCRIBING STATES

The eighteenth Annual Regular Meeting of the Subscribing States to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) took place in Vienna, with the participation of 74 registered delegations, from June 3 to 4, 2019.

The participants reaffirmed the importance of the Code as a unique multilateral confidence building and transparency instrument against ballistic missile proliferation, which contributes to the process of strengthening existing national and international security arrangements and disarmament and non-proliferation objectives and mechanisms.

Sweden, as outgoing Chair of the HCoC, outlined the efforts made during the last year to enhance the universalization of the HCoC, to enhance its implementation by Subscribing States, and to raise awareness of the Code.

Norway, on assuming the Chairmanship for 2019-2020, introduced the objectives of its presidency for the year. The main objectives are the universalization of the Code and its full implementation in order to enhance its multinational confidence building ability.

The Subscribing States decided that Switzerland will take over the Chairmanship from Norway at the 19th Annual Regular Meeting in 2020.

Currently, 140 States have subscribed to the Code. Subscribing States appreciated the outreach activities conducted on behalf of the HCoC.

Togo's subscription to the Code shortly before the Meeting, as the 140th Subscribing State was welcomed, and seen as a good example for the process of universalization.

The Subscribing States stressed the ongoing need to prevent and curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and to encourage new subscriptions to the Hague Code of Conduct, particularly by countries with space launch vehicle and ballistic missile capabilities.

The Subscribing States reaffirmed the threat to international peace and security posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, which constitutes a serious concern of the international community, in various regions of the world. The Subscribing States discussed developments in the DPRK missile programme since the 2018 HCoC regular meeting in the context of relevant UNSC resolutions.

The Subscribing States stressed the importance of achieving full implementation of the Code, in particular with regard to the timely submission of pre-launch notifications and annual declarations.

The Subscribing States also reaffirmed the right to exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes as provided for in the Outer Space Treaty. The need to exercise the necessary vigilance in the consideration of assistance to Space Launch Vehicle programmes so as to not contribute to, support or assist any ballistic missile programme in countries in contravention of international norms and obligations, as is provided for in the Code, was also emphasized.

The Subscribing States agreed to continue efforts to universalise the Code, which remains of paramount importance. The high number of 171 votes in favour of the biennial UN General Assembly Resolution on HCoC adopted at its 73rd Session in 2018 was welcomed by the Subscribing States.

For more information on the HCoC go to: <http://www.hcoc.at>