



**71<sup>st</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly  
First Committee**

**Remarks by Louis RIQUET  
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to the Conference on Disarmament**

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**OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

Mr Chairman

France aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to make some additional remarks in a national capacity.

The issue of “other weapons of mass destruction” is an extremely important one for my delegation. It is an essential component of the First Committee’s work, which requires concerted action on the part of all the delegations.

1- Progress was made this past year, but the current situation remains concerning, especially because proliferation crises persist.

France condemns the nuclear testings and numerous **ballistic missiles launches by North Korea**, in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions. They constitute a threat to regional and international peace and stability. These provocations are unacceptable and destabilizing. France calls for the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of nuclear and ballistic programmes by North Korea.

**The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or Iran nuclear deal, signed on 14 July 2015 and endorsed by Resolution 2231** has paved the way for restoring confidence in the Iranian nuclear programme and, in doing so, has strengthened our non-proliferation regime. But the Iran nuclear deal and the adoption of Resolution 2231 will only be a diplomatic success if they are strictly complied with.

Information from Iraq and Syria concerning the **use of chemical weapons** is especially alarming. The implementation of a joint investigative mechanism (JIM) has helped identify the perpetrators of these attacks; out of the nine cases studied, two are attributable with certainty to the Syrian authorities, and a third to Daesh. To address these flagrant violations of international commitments, we must end impunity and the threat of chemical weapons. Those responsible will have to answer for what they have done. In addition to this information, **doubts remain about the Syrian Government's declaration on its chemical weapons programme to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)**: the potential existence of residual capabilities on the Syrian territory only increases the risk of proliferation of these weapons to terrorists. Now more than ever, France considers that only a political transition is capable of reuniting Syrians and building sustainable peace.

France considers that the resolution on the Convention on Chemical Weapons (CWC), traditionally submitted by Poland, should reflect these particularly worrying developments, as should the international community's consensus in support of actions conducted by OPCW and the United Nations to address them.

**Resolution 1540**, and the committee that monitors its implementation, are today an essential tool. Twelve years after it was adopted, the resolution has been progressively implemented in all the regions of the world, and in all the different fields. But the threat has evolved and new challenges have emerged, as highlighted by the **Comprehensive Review of the implementation of Resolution 1540**. The role of 1540 Committee and its expert capabilities should therefore be enhanced.

Moreover, France considers that securing materials, particularly radioactive sources, is a priority. It is the aim of France's initiative backed by 28 other States and organizations at the Nuclear Security Summit this year in Washington. France will also submit its **biennial resolution on radioactive sources** again with Germany at this session of the First Committee.

The **issue of delivery systems of weapons of mass destruction** is also central. Resolutions 1540, 1887 and 1977 have described the proliferation of missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction as a threat to international peace and security. The North Korean ballistic missile programme is advancing in violation of United Nations resolutions. Iranian ballistic missiles launches are destabilizing and contrary to the UNSC call in its Resolution 2231. We urgently need to step up our efforts to strengthen multilateral arrangements, including the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC), which we would like to see universalized, and the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). We thus welcome the accession of India to these two important instruments.

Mr Chairman,

An important conference will be held in 2016: the **8<sup>th</sup> Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention**.

It will provide an opportunity to make real progress towards a common understanding of the Convention's implications. It is important that it be able to establish a robust roadmap for the next five years. To do so, collective work is needed that overcomes bilateral and regional divides.

During the meeting of experts in August 2015, France and India jointly submitted a proposal aimed at establishing a **database of offers of assistance pursuant to Article VII** of the Convention. This concrete operational proposal has already received positive feedback. We therefore encourage delegations that so wish to co-sponsor the document ahead of the 8<sup>th</sup> Review Conference.

France has been fully committed to seeking innovative and effective solutions, aimed at strengthening transparency and building confidence among States Parties in the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. With this in mind, we have proposed the creation of a voluntary **peer-review mechanism**, aimed at enabling collective and participatory evaluation of the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention's provisions by each State Party.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Review Conference should also allow to consolidate outcomes achieved thus far, as well as lay foundations for a peaceful dialogue that is able to meet the challenges of the Convention.

Thank you.