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RESOLUTION 419/A(E)

by the representatives Mag. Christine Muttonen, Dr. Reinhold Lopatka and colleagues

regarding the efforts of the Austrian Federal Government in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

STATEMENT OF GROUNDS

More than twenty years after the end of the East-West conflict and regardless of numerous arms control agreements, the probability of a nuclear explosion somewhere in the world – whether intentionally or inadvertently – appears higher today than during the Cold War. While a ban on biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction was achieved in the past decades, there was no comparable development regarding nuclear weapons. Until this day, the recognised nuclear weapons states have not implemented the Non-proliferation Treaty's (NPT) key provision relating to nuclear disarmament. They continue to block negotiations for a ban, referring to national security concerns.

Since the entry-into-force of the NPT on 5th March 1970, the recognised nuclear weapons states, namely the USA, Russia, China, the UK and France, were joined by India, Pakistan, North Korea and probably Israel, adding four to the count of states possessing nuclear weapons. There are concerns that Iran might also be working on the development of an atomic bomb. The increasing number of nuclear possessor states puts the NPT under pressure and threatens to gradually affect the integrity of this ordering system. With each new possessor state, the sense of insecurity of the other states, as well as their wish to arm themselves, increases. Moreover, with each additional state possessing nuclear weapons along with the knowhow for their development, the risk that both weapons and knowledge are passed on to other states, but also of non-state actors, increases.

In this respect, the expanding civilian use of nuclear power for energy production worldwide must be viewed very critically, as it abets the proliferation of radioactive material and nuclear technologies. As proliferation continues, it increases the likelihood of a use of this most powerful of weapons of mass and the risk of nuclear terrorism.

The benefit of nuclear weapons is therefore disproportionate to the enormous hazard and risks they represent. Recent studies have again clearly demonstrated that the use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences, not only for the people living in the direct vicinity of the detonation. Even if the use of nuclear weapons is relatively small and contained at regional level, it would have a disastrous impact on world climate, health, food and social security of billions of people. The international community and international relief agencies would not even remotely be able to react adequately to such a disaster and to help the people affected.

We therefore welcome the commitment of Norway, Mexico and Austria among others to organise international conferences to give a new dynamic to the international

disarmament discourse, through including the humanitarian impact to its scope and facilitating greater involvement of civil society organisations.

The Parliament pledges its full support to the Federal Government for the organisation and realisation of the international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons which is planned for December.

The signatories therefore present the following

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

May the Parliament resolve as follows:

The Federal Government is called,

- to continue its engagement on the international and European level for disarmament and for the complete prohibition of the development, sale, acquisition, proliferation and possession of nuclear weapons under international law;
- to plead actively for the realisation of weapons of mass destruction-free zones at bilateral and multilateral level;
- in this regard, to adopt as its own the goal of a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East stipulated in UN-Resolution 687 and to take initiatives to this end at multi- and bilateral level;
- to push for an effective ban in the EU on arms exports and in particular on means of delivery of nuclear weapons in crisis zones;
- to pronounce itself in favour of deleting nuclear deterrence from the NATO-doctrine;
- with respect to the current crisis in the Ukraine, to oppose any political or military act aiming at the expansion of nuclear deterrence;
- to condemn in strongest terms any threat to use nuclear weapons;
- to advocate for the strengthening and, where need be, the creation of non-military intergovernmental organisations for security and cooperation in Europe and beyond;
- to advocate for a prohibition or at least for a stricter regulation of the export of nuclear technology in Europe.

The assignment of the Foreign Affairs Committee is herewith formally requested.

This resolution was debated by the Foreign Affairs Committee 3 July 2014 and adopted unanimously by the Parliament on 10 July 2014

http://www.parlament.gv.at/PAKT/VHG/XXV/A/A_00419/index.shtml