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LATEST HCOC NEWS

ANNUAL REGULAR MEETING IN VIENNA

On 15-16 June 2023, during the Annual Regular Meeting of the HCoC, Amb. Suleima Dauda Umar from the Federal Republic of Nigeria concluded his Chairmanship of the Code and handed over to Amb. Eoin O’Leary from the Republic of Ireland.

Amb. Eoin O’Leary is Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations in Vienna. During his career, Mr O’Leary has served in various capacities, among them Ambassador to China (2017-2020); Director General, European Neighbourhood and Policy Division (2016-2017); Director General, European Union Division (2015-2016); Ambassador to Russia (2013-2015); Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the OSCE (2007-2013); and Assistant Principal/Principal Officer (1995-2001) and later Assistant Secretary (2001-2007) at the European and International Affairs Division, Department of the Taoiseach.

Some states publicly indicated that, during the meeting, they reaffirmed their strong support for the Hague Code of Conduct as an important international multilateral instrument to limit the proliferation of ballistic missiles and related technologies. Some states highlighted the need to promote the Code's universalisation, full implementation and efficient functioning while reiterating their commitment to international law and multilateralism. UNODA briefed the delegates on disarmament education at the annual meeting.



FIFTH EU COUNCIL DECISION IN SUPPORT OF THE HCOC

➤➤➤ The project ***Supporting the Hague Code of Conduct*** – carried out by the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique and funded by the EU – has been running since 2008 and has been renewed by several Council decisions.

On 17 January 2023, the Council of the European Union adopted [Decision \(CFSP\) 2023/124](#), the fifth one in support of the Hague Code of Conduct and of ballistic missile non-proliferation in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The main objective of this Decision is to promote through specific measures the universality, the full implementation and the enhancement of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. This Decision will complement the Union’s diplomatic engagement with subscribing States and non-subscribing States to the Code.

Find out more on [this page](#).

LOOKING BACK ON THE NIGERIAN CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE HCoC



Amb. Suleiman Dauda Umar served as chair of the HCoC for the 2022-2023 period. Here is his feedback on his year as Chair...

➤➤➤ WHAT MOTIVATES NIGERIA'S INVOLVMENT IN THE CODE ?

Nigeria joined the HCoC on 25 November 2002 (...) before the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/Res/59/91) on 3 December 2004. The HCoC, as we know, is a politically binding instrument that aims at contributing to the process of strengthening the existing national and international security arrangements, disarmament and non-proliferation objectives and mechanisms. It is expected that subscribing states recognize the purpose of the Code and support the objectives to curb the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). This cannot be achieved except by cooperation, transparency, and confidence-building measures amongst the subscribing states. Nigeria, as it were, has no plan for nuclear programme. Nigeria was motivated to join the Code in order to contribute to limit the proliferation of weapon of mass destruction.

2022-2023 HAS BEEN AN EXCEEDINGLY DIFFICULT YEAR FOR ALL THINGS MULTILATERAL. WHAT IS YOUR ASSESSMENT OF THE RESILIENCE OF THE CODE TO GEOGRAPHICAL DEVELOPMENTS ? <<<<

My assessment of the Code during this period is actually very difficult. The current and emerging issues in the global arena have been very volatile (...). The incidence of war in Ukraine has polarized the world. The current activities in the world (...) have been volatile and, due to the positions assumed by different subscribing states on the matter, conferences have been inconclusive - including the 21st Annual Regular Meeting of the Subscribing States of the Code, that was held on 30-31 May 2022. At this event, states could not reach a consensus (...). Even the Summary of the Chair could not be issued. This has replicated itself in different international fora within the period under review. It further rubbed off on the Chair's preparation for outreach programme to the African Union Summit as sideline event.

➤➤➤ WHAT WOULD BE YOUR ARGUMENTS TO CONVINC OTHER COUNTRIES FROM THE GLOBAL SOUTH TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE HCoC AND TO PLAY A MORE IMPORTANT ROLE IN IT? WHAT CAN BE DONE AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL TO ENCOURAGE AFRICAN PARTICIPATION IN THESE MULTILATERAL MECHANISMS?

It is a fact that HCoC is a technically oriented organisation that has political undertone, which makes it politically binding for those states that signs it. It aims at strengthening the existing national and international security arrangements, disarmament, and non-proliferation related matters. The purpose of the Code, as of today, has been politicized because of the current and emerging issues in the international system. It is therefore necessary for parties to uphold the tenets of the Code by playing according to the rules, cooperating, and implementing the Code for the common benefits of mankind. In addition, the subscribing states should be encouraged to establish confidence-building measures in all their dealings relating to the implementation of the Code. Concerning the African countries, they are looking at the conduct of major players as regards transparency, cooperation, and openness before they would join.



NEWS ABOUT THE PROJECT

SIDE EVENT IN VIENNA ON UPCOMING TRENDS FOR BALLISTIC MISSILE NON-PROLIFERATION



The **Annual Regular Meeting of the HCoC** took place on 15-16 June 2023, at the Vienna International Center. On 15 June FRS organised a side-event in Vienna, to which took part around 60 representatives from subscribing states taking part to the ARM, as well as some invited guests from non-subscribing states.

The outgoing Chair, Amb. Suleiman Dauda Umar, and the incoming Chair, Amb. Eoin O'Leary, delivered introductory remarks. Four experts then discussed upcoming trends in the fields of ballistic missile proliferation. Tianran Xu (ONN) focused on the situation in East Asia and evoked the tools available for open-source intelligence that can help track missile proliferation. Tal Inbar (Missile Defence Advocacy Alliance) mentioned some important recent developments that took place in the Middle East, and assessed the impact of new technologies in particular hypersonic missiles and new categories of space launchers. Tomas Hrozensky (ESPI) also focused on space and mentioned the evolutions in the space sector that are going to have an impact on proliferation. Finally, Emmanuelle Maitre (FRS) evoked the resilience of the regulatory environment to these changes, especially export control mechanisms and confidence building measures.

Read more [here](#).



LAUNCH OF THE BALLISTIC MISSILE PROLIFERATION YOUTH GROUP

As part of the new EU Council Decision on the Code, the FRS has created a Youth Group aiming at raising awareness on missile proliferation, increasing knowledge on missile technologies and promoting the emergence of new perspectives on ways to regulate these weapons.



The Ballistic Missile Non-proliferation Youth Group Kickoff Event took place online on 28 June 2023, when the 17 selected participants had a chance to meet virtually and hear about the activities planned as part of the programme. The Group will meet in person in the fall, in France, for a first work session.

NEWS ABOUT THE PROJECT

REGIONAL SEMINAR IN NIGERIA

➤➤➤ In the framework of the Nigerian Chairmanship of the Code, FRS organised a regional seminar in Abuja on 22-23 June 2023. This seminar was supported by the EU and co-organised by the Federal government of Nigeria. More than 70 delegates and experts took part in the 2-day event, representing around 15 African countries.

The seminar was an opportunity to discuss to what extent missile proliferation represents a threat in Africa. Thanks to the participation of international and regional experts, the Chair and the Executive Secretariat (Austria), the main features of the Code were explained. Specific sessions were organised to discuss how African states can increase their participation in the Code and what factors are hampering the subscription of some states.

It was an opportunity to discuss how a confidence-building measure such as the Code can fit with the disarmament and non-proliferation policy of regional states. Thanks to the participation of the Nigerian Space Agency (NARSDA), participants evoked the role of the Code in space security and its relevance for emerging space-fearing nations such as Nigeria.

[More information here.](#)



NEWS ABOUT MISSILE PROLIFERATION

NORTH KOREA TESTS A SOLID-FUEL ICBM



➤➤➤ On 13 April 2023, North Korea tested for the first time the [solid-propulsion ICBM Hwasong-18](#). The missile covered approximately 1000 km with a maximum altitude of 3000 km. The particular trajectory adopted by the Hwasong-18 alarmed [Japan](#).

Announced as a strategic priority by the North Korean regime in 2021, the Hwasong-18 presents [technical similarities](#) with the Russian Topol-M and the American Minuteman III – which highlights North Korea's expertise, as well as its capacity to build large solid-propulsion engines.

Even if the origin of the propellant used remains uncertain, the Hwasong-18 probably combined knowhow acquired with the Pukguksong series, as well as the [short-range missiles](#) massively tested in the past few years KN-23, KN-24 and KN-25.

Considering the increased [survivability](#) offered by the use of solid fuel, this new ICBM represents another step in the North Korean efforts to develop a robust nuclear deterrence strategy and to diversify its arsenal.



SUSPENSION OF THE NEW START TREATY

On 21 February 2023, V. Putin announced the [suspension](#) of Russia's participation in the New Start Treaty and stated that the country will not commit to it as long as it is not reciprocated by NATO nuclear-weapon states. <<<

This decision seems to be in retaliation against Western support to Ukraine following Russia's invasion. Moscow declared that it refused to allow on-site inspections, as long as the United States continues to act against what it describes as its strategic interests.

This suspension, formalized by Russia's Minister for Foreign Affairs, has been qualified as [unlawful](#) by Washington, which had been pushing for resuming the full implementation of the Treaty for several months. While both states indicated their intention to respect the ceilings on strategic weapons imposed by the Treaty, they are no longer sharing [notifications](#) on the status or location of missiles and launchers. Missiles pre-launch notifications are however going to continue, [bilaterally](#) and in the framework of the HCOC.

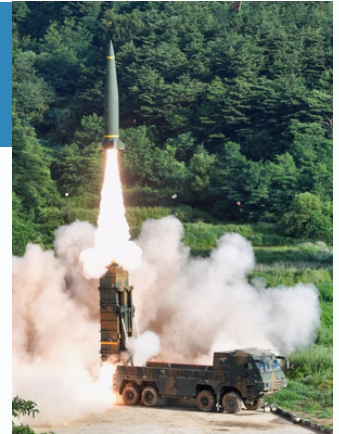
SELECTED MISSILES TEST LAUNCHES



Hyunmoo-5:

- 03/02/2023 and 10/02/2023

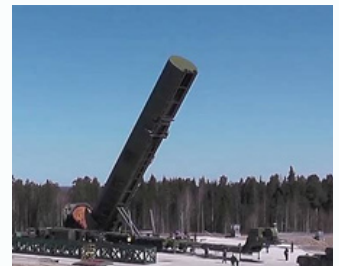
First test of the [Hyunmoo-5](#). Hyunmoo-5 is reported to be the first South Korean medium-range ballistic missile. As part of the country's "Korea Massive Punishment and Retaliation (KMPPR)" strategy, it could represent an important deterrence element vis-à-vis North Korea as well as a decisive one if an attack was to occur.



Sarmat:

- 20/02/2023

Second test of the [Sarmat](#) (RS-28), ended possibly in failure. Sarmat is a Russian next-generation intercontinental ballistic missile, designed to replace the SS-18 Voyevoda ICBM. Compared to its predecessor, the Sarmat has supposedly an extended range and can carry a greater number of warheads.



SELECTED SLV LAUNCHES

Chollima-1:

- 30/05/2023

[Chollima-1](#) is North Korea's new type of space launch vehicle (SLV). Its initial launch, from Sohae, was unsuccessful, and it failed to take off. The country said it is currently working on resolving the SLV defects to conduct further test.



Starship S24:

- 20/04/2023

[Starship's](#) first launch ended in failure as the rocket exploded soon after taking-off. Space X's super heavy-lift rocket is the largest and most powerful rocket ever to have flown. It is designed for space exploration and to have a fully reusable configuration.


Terran-1:

- 23/03/2023


[Terran-1](#), from the US start-up Relativity, failed to reach orbit on its first launch. However, the rocket successfully lifted and passed the first stage, which is a significant milestone for an almost fully-3D printed rocket.

END NOTE

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

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- William Alberque, 'What has the war on Ukraine revealed about Russia's non-strategic missiles?,' *Analysis*, [IISS](#), 6 March 2023.
 - Emmanuelle Maitre, 'Reducing strategic risks: a pragmatic and necessary approach,' *HCoC Issue Brief*, [FRS](#), May 2023.
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 - Kartik Bommakanti, 'Advances in Chinese missile defence and hypersonic capabilities,' *Raisina Debates*, [Observer Research Foundation](#), 19 June 2023.
 - Fabian Hinz, 'After half a century Egypt's Scuds soldier on,' *Military Balance blog*, [IISS](#), 16 June 2023.
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 - Timothy Wright, 'UK to supply Storm Shadow missile to Ukraine,' *Analysis*, [IISS](#), 16 May 2023.
 - Tianran Xu, 'The DPRK's First Solid-Propellant ICBM Launch,' *Strategic Delivery Vehicle Development Series*, [ONN](#), 14 April 2023.
 - Joseph Dempsey, 'Pyongyang's Sea Cruise,' *Military Balance blog*, [IISS](#), 28 April 2023.

INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

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- Organisation website: [Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique](#).
 - Further information on the project implementation available [here](#).
 - Project website: [Supporting the Hague Code of Conduct](#).

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