

20TH REGULAR MEETING OF THE SUBSCRIBING STATES TO THE HAGUE CODE OF CONDUCT AGAINST BALLISTIC MISSILE PROLIFERATION (HCoC)

PRESS RELEASE BY HCoC SUBSCRIBING STATES

The twentieth Annual Regular Meeting of the Subscribing States to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) took place in Vienna under the Chairmanship of Argentina, Chair for the period 2021-2022, with the participation of 77 registered delegations, on 7th and 8th of July 2021.

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.

Switzerland, as outgoing Chair of 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.

Argentina, on assuming the Chairmanship for 2021-22, introduced the objectives of its presidency for the year. The main objectives are to continue the efforts for the universalization of the Code and its implementation as well as the preparations to mark the 20th anniversary of the Code.

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 and reiterated their intention to encourage and achieve improved performance in these areas.

Subscribing States appreciated the outreach activities conducted on behalf of the HCoC.

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 2020 HCoC regular meeting in the context of relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

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 programmes 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 universalize the Code through various outreach activities. Currently, 143 States have subscribed to the Code.

The Subscribing States welcomed the high number of 176 votes in favour of the biennial UN General Assembly Resolution on HCoC adopted at its 75th session in 2020.

The Subscribing States welcomed ideas to mark the occasion of the Code's 20th anniversary. Subscribing States expressed their readiness to cooperate with the chair in developing modalities and organizational aspects of relevant initiatives.

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