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ON NUCLEAR ISSUES

LITHUANIA

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Lithuania, a NATO and EU member, has been substantially engaged in discussions on nuclear disarmament within the NPT and other forums. The country supports the incremental approach to nuclear disarmament, and attaches great importance to the preservation of NATO nuclear deterrence capabilities, including U.S. non-strategic weapons based in Europe. Lithuania has, however, been advocating for NATO–Russia talks on transparency and confidence building measures with regard to the non-strategic nuclear weapons, as well as their reciprocal reductions.

NUCLEAR

Lithuania does not possess, produce or host nuclear weapons on its territory. Lithuania is a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and has an Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The country is a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and a participating state of the Wassenaar Arrangement.

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE, DISARMAMENT AND POSITION REGARDING NATO'S NUCLEAR POLICY

Lithuania joined NATO in 2004, seven years after the signing of the NATO–Russia Founding Act, in which the Alliance declared that it had “no intention, no plan and no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territory of new members.” This declaration precluded Lithuania’s direct involvement in nuclear-sharing arrangements, although the country could potentially play non-nuclear supportive roles in possible nuclear operations of the Alliance.¹ Lithuania also takes part in common planning as a member of the Nuclear Planning Group, and participates in political discussions on NATO nuclear policy.²

During the debates on the 2010 Strategic Concept and on the 2012 Deterrence and Defence Posture Review (DDPR), Lithuania publically stressed the need for

¹ The scope of such potential participation would, however, be further limited by the fact that Lithuania does not possess combat aircraft.

² L. Kulesa, “The New NATO Member States,” in: P. Foradori (ed.), *Tactical Nuclear Weapons and Euro-Atlantic Security*, Routledge, Abingdon, 2013, pp. 143–144.

the preservation of nuclear deterrence capabilities, and openly referred to the basing of U.S. non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNWs) in Europe by stating that “the significance of the U.S. nuclear presence in Europe should be highlighted as one of the most important elements of the Alliance’s policy of deterrence.”³

The country did not explicitly name the specific countries to be deterred, although, on numerous occasions, it referred to the possible presence of Russian NSNWs in Kaliningrad Oblast and in the vicinity of NATO’s eastern border.⁴ Consequently, Lithuania called for negotiations on reductions of such weapons.⁵

The idea of reductions of U.S. and Russian NSNWs was also raised in an article published in May 2012, shortly before the adoption of the DDPR, and co-authored by Lithuania’s former defence minister, Linas Linkevicius, who was later (in December 2012) appointed as foreign minister. The article supported the dialogue on transparency regarding NSNWs, as well

as cuts in such arsenals, but only if they were to be conducted on a reciprocal basis. At the same time, the authors pointed out Russia’s reliance on nuclear weapons, argued that the chances of such an agreement with Russia seemed unpromising, and opposed unilateral moves by NATO. They stressed that the reduction or removal of U.S. NSNWs would undermine the U.S. commitment to Europe and NATO’s cohesion, especially in the light of the drawdown of U.S. troops from Europe, which was taking place at the time of the article’s publication.⁶

Such views corresponded with the conclusions of studies based on interviews with Lithuanian and regional officials and experts.⁷ Some of these studies additionally noted that, although Lithuania, along with two other Baltic states, perceived NSNWs mainly in terms of reassurance and deterrence with regard to Russia, it also sought their value in strengthening NATO’s security against other potential threats, including the possibility of a nuclear-armed Iran.⁸

³ “Experts Group Presents Recommendations on New Strategic Concept for NATO,” Permanent delegation of the Republic of Lithuania to NATO, 19 May 2010, www.nato.mfa.lt. See also: “Lithuanian Foreign Minister: attention to European security must not be reduced,” *alfa.lt*, 7 April 2010, www.alfa.lt; “NATO Must Guarantee the Deterrent and Security of Its Member Countries, Lithuania’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Says,” *European Dialogue*, 26 April 2010, www.eurodialogue.eu.

⁴ “Russia Seen Moving Nukes to NATO Border,” *Global Security Newswire*, 30 November 2010, www.nti.org/gsn.

⁵ “Lithuania Says Russia Fielding Nukes Close to Border,” *Global Security Newswire*, 9 February 2011, www.nti.org/gsn; M.B. Sheridan, “U.S. allies in Europe concerned about a possible failure of New START,” *The Washington Post*, 21 November 2010, www.washingtonpost.com.

⁶ I. Liegis, L. Linkevicius, J. Onyszkiewicz, “Why Europe Still Needs Nuclear Deterrence,” *European Leadership Network*, 21 May 2012, www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org.

⁷ See: J. Durkalec, “NATO Defence and Deterrence Posture: Central and Eastern European Perspectives,” *PISM Policy Paper*, no. 29, May 2012; Ł. Kulesa, “Polish and Central European Priorities on NATO’s Future Nuclear Policy,” *BASIC NATO Nuclear Policy Papers*, issue 2, 2010; S. Shetty, I. Kerns, S. Lunn, “The Baltic States, NATO and Non-Strategic Nuclear Weapons in Europe,” *RUSI-ELN Occasional Paper*, December 2012, Royal United Services Institute.

⁸ S. Shetty, I. Kerns, S. Lunn, “The Baltic States...,” *op. cit.*, p. 17; J. Durkalec, “NATO Defence...,” *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Lithuania has continued to express concerns about the potential presence of Russian nuclear-capable systems in its vicinity after the adoption of DDPR, and amid NATO–Russia tensions in the wake of the Ukrainian crisis, but it has not directly referred to NATO

nuclear policy.⁹ Following the speech of U.S. president Barack Obama in Berlin in 2013, Lithuanian president Dalia Grybauskaitė has publically objected to unilateral reductions in the U.S. nuclear arsenal.¹⁰

NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT EFFORTS IN THE GLOBAL ARENA

During the meetings of the Preparatory Commission for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, Lithuania has associated itself with the position of the EU, and delivered its own national statements.

Lithuania has stressed its support for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, welcomed the New START Treaty between the United States and Russia, and called for further reductions in nuclear stockpiles. According to Lithuania, the priority in arms control and the disarmament process should be given to non-strategic nuclear weapons (NSNWs), as such arms were not the subject of existing treaties. Lithuania called for the establishment of reciprocal transparency and confidence building measures relating

to NSNWs, as well as for the “verifiable reductions and ultimate elimination” of these weapons.¹¹

Lithuania participated in the second and third conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, in Nayarit, Mexico, in February 2014, and in Vienna in December 2014. At the Vienna conference, Lithuania expressed its “deep understanding” of the humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, stating that it motivates “our collective efforts to nuclear arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.” The country also supported the educational efforts on humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons.¹²

⁹ “Russian Bombers Spark NATO Scramble,” *Defense News*, 24 March 2015, www.defensenews.com; “Defence Minister sees Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad as alarming news,” *The Lithuania Tribune*, 16 December 2013, www.lithuaniatribune.com.

¹⁰ “President Grybauskaitė thinks that the US should not disarm unilaterally,” *The Lithuania Tribune*, 20 June 2013, www.lithuaniatribune.com.

¹¹ “General Statement by Ambassador Rytis Paulauskas, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania to the UN Office and Other International Organisations in Geneva,” second session of the Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review Conference Geneva, 22 April–3 May 2013, pp. 1–2.

¹² “Statement by the Republic of Lithuania,” third conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons, Vienna, 8–9 December 2014.

Nonetheless, Lithuania has not backed the calls for a legal instrument banning nuclear weapons on the grounds of international humanitarian law, pursued by some countries participating in the Humanitarian Initiative.¹³ Lithuania has argued that the total elimination of nuclear weapons requires the participation of the whole international community, especially the nuclear-armed states, which have opposed the idea of such a ban. Moreover, Lithuania added that nuclear disarmament efforts should also take into the account the international security environment.¹⁴

Lithuania has instead advocated for “logical, practical and effective” disarmament steps, such as reductions of nuclear arsenals, the entry into force of the CTBT, and commencement of negotiations on the treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices (the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, or FMCT).¹⁵ A similar, gradual approach based on the 2010 NPT Action Plan was also presented in the working paper “Building blocks for a world without nuclear weapons,” submitted

by Lithuania and 19 other countries at the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee. The paper noted that a document or framework on the final elimination of nuclear weapons would be considered as a conclusive measure in a longer process, depending on progress in shaping the “prevailing environment of trust and confidence.”¹⁶

In a statement delivered at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in October 2014, Lithuania openly condemned Russia for its actions against the Ukraine, which violated the 1994 Budapest Memorandum.¹⁷ Lithuania also referred indirectly to Russia at the 2014 Vienna conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, by stating that the “international community must have taken note of recent overt references to its nuclear arsenal by one Nuclear Weapon State not represented in this conference in a way that runs counter to multilateral disarmament efforts.”¹⁸

Lithuania is an observer state to the Conference on Disarmament (CD), and has called for enlargement of its membership.¹⁹ Lithuania suggested, that if the deadlock on

¹³ Ł. Kulesa, “The nuclear weapon ban is inevitable—too bad that it won’t bring disarmament,” *European Leadership Network*, 9 December 2014, www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org.

¹⁴ “Statement by the Republic of Lithuania,” *op. cit.*, Vienna, 8–9 December 2014.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶ “Building blocks for a world without nuclear weapons,” working paper submitted by Australia, Belgium, Canada, Colombia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Ukraine, Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, New York, 15 April 2014.

¹⁷ “Statement by the Republic of Lithuania, Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons,” United Nations General Assembly, 69th session, First Committee, New York, 20 October 2014.

¹⁸ “Statement by the Republic of Lithuania,” *op. cit.*, Vienna, 8–9 December 2014.

¹⁹ “Statement by the Republic of Lithuania, Thematic Discussion on Disarmament Machinery,” United Nations General Assembly, 69th session, First Committee, New York, 17 October 2014.

FMCT negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament persisted, the states could use the approach applied in the case of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).²⁰ The ATT's text was negotiated during two special UN conferences, and finally adopted by a vote in the UN General Assembly.²¹

Lithuanian statements within the NPT have endorsed export controls, and called for strengthening of the EU export control regime. In the Lithuanian view, the Additional Protocol, together with comprehensive safeguard agreements, constitute a verification standard that should be universally adopted and

implemented. The country has also promoted adherence to international instruments of nuclear safety and security. Lithuania vocally recognised and supported the IAEA's "key" role in the fields of non-proliferation, nuclear security and nuclear safety.²² At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, Lithuania co-sponsored a working paper promoting international cooperation on nuclear energy, including multilateral fuel cycle arrangements.²³

Lithuania participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). In April 2007, Lithuania hosted the PSI's air interdiction exercise "Smart Raven."²⁴

NUCLEAR SECURITY²⁵

The 2014 NTI Nuclear Materials Security Index ranked Lithuania as sixth out of 151 countries without weapons-usable nuclear materials. Lithuania ratified the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on

the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), along with the 2005 amendment. The country participates in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT). Since 2012, Lithuania has been taking part in the Nuclear Security Summits (NSS) process.²⁶

²⁰ "General Statement by Ambassador Rytis Paulauskas...", *op. cit.*, p. 2.

²¹ See: "The Arms Trade Treaty at a Glance," Arms Control Association, www.armscontrol.org.

²² "General Statement by Ambassador Rytis Paulauskas...", *op. cit.*, pp. 1–3.

²³ "Supporting the beneficial, sustainable, safe and secure development of nuclear energy," working paper submitted by Belgium, Bulgaria, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America, 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, New York, 12 May 2010.

²⁴ "Lithuania Hosts Proliferation Security Initiative Interdiction Exercise (SMART RAVEN)," U.S. Department of State, 27 April 2007, www.state.gov.

²⁵ This section provides basic information on Lithuania's engagement in international cooperation on nuclear security. For more detailed data see: "Lithuania," Country Profiles, The Nuclear Threat Initiative, www.nti.org/country-profiles/lithuania.

²⁶ On Lithuania's participation in the NSS process see: K. Kubiak, "A Little-Known Success Story: Implementation of the NSS Goals in Central Europe," *PISM Policy Paper*, no. 9 (92), May 2014; "Nuclear Security Summit 2014, National Progress Report: Republic of Lithuania," www.nss2014.com.

Lithuania does not operate any nuclear reactors. The country previously operated the Ignalina nuclear power station, with two Soviet-origin nuclear reactors, which were shut down in 2004 and 2009 respectively. There are plans to build a new power plant with one nuclear reactor in a joint project with Latvia, Estonia and the GE Hitachi corporation. The negotiations between the parties have however not been concluded as of April 2015.²⁷

Since 2003, Lithuania has cooperated with the U.S. Department of Energy's

National Nuclear Security Administration in countering nuclear smuggling. Within the "Second Line of Defence" programme, the U.S. has provided Lithuania with equipment and training assistance.²⁸

In June 2012, Lithuania launched its Nuclear Security Center of Excellence (NSCOE), which focuses on training, courses and exercises on countering nuclear smuggling. Activities in the NSCOE are conducted in cooperation with the U.S. and the IAEA.²⁹

MISSILES

MISSILE DEFENCE

Lithuania neither possesses nor plans to acquire ballistic missile defence (BMD) capabilities. There are no plans to deploy any BMD installations on Lithuanian territory. The country is a strong supporter of the deployment of elements of the U.S. missile defence system in Europe (the European Phased Adaptive Approach, or EPAA) as part of NATO's BMD capability.

Vilnius also endorsed the previous plans to deploy U.S. missile defence installations in

Poland and the Czech Republic, announced in 2007 by the George W. Bush administration. There were no formal negotiations on missile defence between the United States and Lithuania, although, in 2008, both sides reportedly held some informal talks on possible hosting of U.S. missile interceptors in Lithuania if Washington could not reach such an agreement with Poland.³⁰ Lithuanian officials declared that their country would be willing to consider hosting elements of the U.S. system.³¹

²⁷ "Nuclear Power in Lithuania," World Nuclear Association, www.world-nuclear.org.

²⁸ "Lithuania to Receive U.S. Radiation Detectors," *Global Security Newswire*, 23 February 2011, www.nti.org/gsn; "Lithuania to Strengthen Criminal Code to Better Combat Nuclear Trafficking," *Global Security Newswire*, 24 April 2013, www.nti.org/gsn.

²⁹ "Nuclear Security Summit 2014...", *op. cit.*

³⁰ "U.S. Looks to Lithuania on Missile Defense," *Global Security Newswire*, 18 June 2008, www.nti.org/gsn.

³¹ "Lithuania Open to U.S. Offer on Missile Shield Site," *Global Security Newswire*, 19 June 2008, www.nti.org/gsn.

In September 2009, Lithuania reacted negatively to the decision of U.S. president Barack Obama to shelve the previous missile defence plans, and expressed its concerns about the U.S. commitment to Central and Eastern Europe.³² Nonetheless, Lithuania has supported the new missile defence architecture proposed by Obama, along with the inclusion of the EPAA in the broader

NATO system. Vilnius has stressed that NATO missile defence should cover the territories of all Allies, including Lithuania.³³ Although Lithuania has not objected to NATO–Russia missile defence cooperation in some areas, such as information sharing, it has argued strongly that the NATO system must remain fully independent and the Alliance must not make any concessions to Russia.³⁴

BALLISTIC AND CRUISE MISSILES

Lithuania does not currently possess, produce or host ballistic or cruise missiles on its territory. Vilnius has not expressed an intention to acquire such capabilities. Lithuania is a subscribing state to the Hague

Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. The country is not a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), although it applied for membership in 2003.³⁵

CHEMICAL

Lithuania does not possess or pursue chemical weapons. Lithuania is a party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC),

as well as a member of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Australia Group (AG).

4. BIOLOGICAL

Lithuania does not possess or pursue biological weapons. The country is a party to

the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

³² "U.S. abandons its plans in Central Europe, 'it is not the best message for Lithuania'," *The Lithuania Tribune*, 18 September 2009, www.lithuaniatribune.com.

³³ "U.S. President supports Lithuania's position concerning anti-missile defense," Permanent delegation of the Republic of Lithuania to NATO, 30 May 2011, www.nato.mfa.lt.

³⁴ "President Grybauskaitė thinks that ...," *op. cit.*

³⁵ "Lithuania," *op. cit.*