

Joint Statement by France and the Netherlands
on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of
The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC)
25 November 2002 – 25 November 2022

2022 marks the 20th anniversary of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC). The two decades of the existence of the Code have illustrated its importance within the multilateral non-proliferation architecture. HCoC is the sole instrument aiming at universality and introducing transparency and confidence-building measures in the field of ballistic missiles and space launch activities, while promoting restraint and vigilance in the development and use of related technologies.

France and the Netherlands are long-standing supporters of HCoC. We firmly believe that effective multilateralism and strengthening of the international rules-based order are the most adequate and effective way to address the issue of ballistic missile proliferation. Under the paramount non-proliferation objective of the Code, we recognize the relevance of HCoC to introduce trust and transparency in ballistic and space launch activities and to avoid misinterpretations, escalatory reactions, or arms race, as well as to contribute, within its remit, to space security.

This year, our support to the Code has further materialized through a multilateral conference that France and the Netherlands, in partnership with the European Union (EU), organised on 1 June 2022 to mark the 20th anniversary of HCoC. Since 2008, the EU and its Member States have provided significant support for the universalisation and functioning of the Code in cooperation with the *Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS)*, which has organised numerous expert missions, regional seminars, and outreach events with non-subscribing states.

Universal acceptance remains a key factor in achieving the full potential of HCoC. Since the signing and entering into force of HCoC, the number of signatories has increased from 93 to 143. We are committed to continue working towards universalisation, full implementation, and efficient functioning of the Code.