

Assuring our Common Future:

A guide to parliamentary action in support of disarmament for security and sustainable development

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Assuring our Common Future:

*A guide to parliamentary action in support of disarmament
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Introduction: The importance of parliamentary action on the UN disarmament agenda

[to be completed]. This section would discuss the value of a UN disarmament agenda and the important role of parliamentarians and it would refer to the already existing parliamentary resources (from IPU, PNND, PGA, PFSALW, GCSP...) and indicate that this current handbook does not seek to replicate these resources, but to complement them.

Summary of *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*

On May 28, 2018, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres released *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, which outlines a set of practical measures across the entire range of disarmament issues, including weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms and future weapon technologies.

In addition to providing an overview of disarmament objectives, *Securing our Common Future* explores the political and security contexts which give rise to weaponization, arms races and armed conflict, and places disarmament into the framework of the work of the United Nations on peacekeeping, peacebuilding and sustainable development.

We are living in dangerous times. Protracted conflicts are causing unspeakable human suffering. Armed groups are proliferating, equipped with a vast array of weapons. Global military spending and competition in arms are increasing, and the tensions of the cold war have returned to a world that has grown more complex. In today's multipolar environment, the mechanisms for contact and dialogue that once helped to defuse tensions between two super-powers have eroded and lost their relevance. This new reality demands that disarmament and non-proliferation are put at the centre of the work of the United Nations. This is the backdrop for my agenda for disarmament.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Foreword to *Securing our Common Future*

Securing our Common Future notes the political and security issues that render disarmament difficult to achieve, but emphasises that disarmament must not wait until improved conditions. Rather, the report notes that disarmament is even more important in times of tension and conflict, and highlights the importance of disarmament as a tool to help prevent armed conflict, improve human rights, enhance security, build confidence and peace, and enable the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Disarmament is a tool to help prevent armed conflict and to mitigate its impacts when it occurs. Measures for disarmament are pursued for many reasons, including to maintain international peace and security, uphold the principles of humanity, protect civilians, promote sustainable development, and prevent and end armed conflict. Just as the notion of security has evolved to place humans at the centre, the objectives and language of disarmament need to evolve in order to contribute to human, national and collective security in the 21st Century.

Introduction to *Securing our Common Future*

Securing our Common Future is divided into four key strands: disarmament to save humanity, disarmament that saves lives, disarmament for future generations and strengthening partnerships for disarmament.

Disarmament to save humanity focuses on nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The core approach of the UN is to facilitate and support the prohibition and elimination of

WMD. Disarmament to save humanity highlights the importance of engaging with those governments who still possess nuclear weapons to ensure practical progress, and it highlights the important role of the United Nations and relevant treaties to strengthen and implement the norms and legal regimes against WMD. *Disarmament to save humanity* also focuses on preventing the emergence of new strands of strategic competition and conflict, and on ensuring the security and sustainability of outer space activities.

The existential threat that nuclear weapons pose to humanity must motivate us to accomplish new and decisive action leading to their total elimination. We owe this to the Hibakusha—the survivors of nuclear war—and to our planet.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Foreword to Securing our Common Future

Disarmament that saves lives focuses on regulating arms proliferation and integrated these efforts into the broader work on conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustainable development. This strand also focuses on mitigating the use of weapons, adherence to international humanitarian law in armed conflict, prevention of explosive weapons in populated areas and the development of regulations to deal with new and emerging technologies including the use of drones. Disarmament that saves lives also focuses on efforts to reduce military spending and build confidence at regional levels.

We must put people at the centre of our disarmament efforts, and ensure disarmament that saves lives today and tomorrow. We owe this to the millions of people killed, injured and uprooted from their homes, in the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, Mali and elsewhere.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Foreword to Securing our Common Future

Disarmament for future generations focuses on new and emerging weapon technologies that could imperil the security of future generations. These include the development of autonomous weapons systems and the use of force in cyber-space. Disarmament for future generations affirms the necessity to ensure that international norms, rules and principles for regulating armed conflict are applied to these new technologies.

We must also work together to make sure that developments in science and technology are used for the good of humankind. Our joint efforts to prevent the weaponization of new technologies will save future generations. We owe this to our children and grandchildren.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, Foreword to Securing our Common Future

Strengthening partnerships for disarmament focuses on the importance to build partnerships between all the relevant stakeholders - including governments, the expert community and civil society organizations - as well as strong interest and support from the general public and well-functioning international forums.

Following the release of *Securing our Common Future*, the UN Secretary-General and the United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) have actively engaged member states and key sectors in civil society in the agenda and its application and implementation. [number] UN Member states have volunteered to serve as champions or supporters of *Securing our Common Future*, each taking responsibility for specific aspects of the report. UNODA has also facilitated the building of partnerships for disarmament with entrepreneurs and business leaders, industry experts and civil society representatives. This has included specific projects on engaging women and youth.

Securing our Common Future explores the specific connections between disarmament and 10 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals: Good health and well-being (Goal 3), Quality education (Goal 4), Gender equality (Goal 5), Decent work and economic growth (Goal 8), Reduced inequalities (Goal 10), Sustainable cities and communities (Goal 11), Life below water (Goal 14), Life on land (Goal 15), Peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16) and Partnerships for the goals (Goal 17). In this way, the report provides a basis for enhancing cooperation between SDG, peace and disarmament communities and processes.

Examples of good practice and recommendations for parliaments and parliamentarians:

CHAPTER 1: DISARMAMENT TO SAVE HUMANITY

Introduction: [to be completed]

Relevant international agreements

- *Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)*
- *Treaties for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa, Antarctica, Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Pacific and South East Asia.*
- *Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)*
- *Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism*
- *Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)*
- *Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)*
- *UN Security Council Resolution 1540*
- *Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START)*
- *Outer Space Treaty*
- *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)*

Examples of good practice [to be completed]

Some possibilities:

1. Nuclear weapons
 - a. Nuclear risk reduction and lowering the role of nuclear weapons including no-first use policies (Examples of action in legislatures of NWS and OSCE PA resolutions)
 - b. Prevention of Arms Race (Examples of action in legislatures of NWS plus joint appeals of parliamentarians)
 - c. Nuclear testing: (Example of exemplary CTBTO legislation such as Australia)
 - d. Nuclear prohibition legislation: (Examples: Austria, Philippines, New Zealand)
 - e. Divestment (Lichtenstein, Norway, NZ, Switzerland. Highlight example of Norway)
2. Chemical weapons
3. Biological weapons
4. Space:

(Examples could include: NZ *Outer Space and High-altitude Activities Act 2017* and amendment 2019 on prohibition of space launches that could contribute to nuclear weapons, destruction of space assets, or serious or irreversible damage to environment).

Recommendations [to be completed]

Resources:

- *Supporting Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. Handbook for Parliamentarians.* Published by IPU and PNND, 2012.
- *Prohibiting and Preventing Nuclear Explosions: Background Information for Parliamentarians on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty* produced by the CTBTO.
- *Parliamentary Handbook To Promote International Legislative Frameworks Addressing the Threats Posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction & Promotion of Bio-Risk Management Best Practices* produced by Parliamentarians for Global Action
- *Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapons Free World*, published 2017 by PNND
- *World table: Monitoring arms control and disarmament agreements*, produced by GCSP, IPU, SOAS & PNND.
- *UNODA database of disarmament treaties.*

CHAPTER 2: DISARMAMENT THAT SAVES LIVES

Introduction: [to be completed]

Relevant international agreements:

- *Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1905*
- *Inhumane Weapons Convention*
- *Convention on Environmental Modification Techniques*
- *Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty*
- *Arms Trade Treaty*
- *Landmines Convention*
- *Convention on Cluster Munitions*

Examples of good practice: [to be completed]

Recommendations: [to be completed]

Resources:

- *Parliamentary Handbook Promoting Signature Ratification and Implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty* produced by Parliamentarians for Global Action
- *Small Arms and Children Parliamentary Handbook*, produced by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons;
- *Small Arms and Violence against Women-Parliamentary handbook* produced by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons;
- *World table: monitoring arms control and disarmament agreements*, produced by GCSP, IPU, SOAS & PNND.
- *UNODA database of disarmament treaties*.

CHAPTER 3: DISARMAMENT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Introduction: [to be completed]

Relevant international agreements:

- *Inhumane Weapons Convention*
- *Inhumane Weapons Convention Protocol on Blinding Laser Weapons*

Examples of good practice: [to be completed]

Recommendations: [to be completed]

Resources: [to be completed]

CHAPTER 4: STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction: [to be completed]

Relevant international agreements:

- UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, peace and security;
- UN Security Council Resolution 2419 on Youth, conflict prevention and conflict resolution;
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, peace and security
- UN General Assembly resolution on Youth, Disarmament and Non-proliferation, 2019

Examples of good practice: [to be completed]

Recommendations: [to be completed]

Resources: [to be completed]

CHAPTER 5: DISARMAMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction: [to be completed]

Relevant international agreements:

- Article 26 of the UN Charter
- UN Sustainable Development Goals
- Final Document of the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development.

Examples of good practice: [to be completed]

Recommendations: [to be completed]

Resources:

- *Warfare or Welfare: Disarmament for Development in the 21st Century*. Published by the International Peace Bureau, 2005.

Annexes:

I. **Overview of recommendations for parliamentarians** [to be completed]

II. **Champion and supporting countries for Securing our Common Future**

see <https://www.un.org/disarmament/sg-agenda/en/#table>

| Country | Focus areas |
|-------------------|---|
| Australia | Norms in cyberspace |
| Austria | Non-use of nuclear weapons, protecting civilians, armed conflict in populated areas, ensuring human control of new weapons technologies |
| Canada | Fissile materials, norm against chemical weapons, responding to use of bio weapons, participation of women. |
| China | Outer space, improvised explosive devices, emerging technologies |
| France | Norm against chemical weapons, responding to use of bio weapons |
| Germany | Responding to use of bio weapons, armed conflict in populated areas, weapons stockpile management, Entry-into-force of CTBT. |
| Ireland | Dialogue with nuclear weapon states (NWS), explosive weapons in populated areas, impact of weapons on conflict management |
| Japan | Entry-into-force of CTBT, youth engagement |
| Kazakhstan | Strengthen and consolidate NWFZs |
| Netherlands | Norms in cyberspace, impact of weapons on conflict management |
| Norway | Disarmament verification |
| Republic of Korea | Youth engagement, norms in cyberspace, facilitating regional dialogue |
| Singapore | Norms in cyberspace |
| Spain | Participation of women |
| Sweden | Dialogue with NWS, participation of women |
| Switzerland | Reducing nuclear risks, managing weapons stockpiles, emerging technologies |

SUPPORTING COUNTRIES

| Country | Focus areas |
|----------------|---|
| Argentina | Facilitating regional dialogue |
| European Union | CTBT, fissile materials, norm against chemical weapons, managing weapons stockpiles |
| Finland | Norm against chemical weapons, managing weapons stockpiles |
| India | New weapon technologies, responsible application of science and technology |
| New Zealand | Reducing nuclear risks, establishing a fund on small arms regulation, explosive weapons in populated areas. |

III. **Parliamentary resources on disarmament and non-proliferation**

- *Supporting Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. Handbook for Parliamentarians*. Published by IPU and PNND, 2012.
- *Prohibiting and Preventing Nuclear Explosions: Background Information for Parliamentarians on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty* produced by the CTBTO.
- *Parliamentary Handbook To Promote International Legislative Frameworks Addressing the Threats Posed by Weapons of Mass Destruction & Promotion of Bio-Risk Management Best Practices* produced by Parliamentarians for Global Action
- *Parliamentary Handbook Promoting Signature Ratification and Implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty* produced by Parliamentarians for Global Action
- *Small Arms and Children Parliamentary Handbook*, produced by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons;
- *Small Arms and Violence against Women-Parliamentary handbook* produced by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons.
- *Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapons Free World*, published 2017 by PNND

IV. **List of relevant UN General Assembly and Security Council resolutions**

[to be completed]

V. **List of key disarmament treaties and agreements** [to be completed]

VI. **Disarmament and non-proliferation commemoration dates**

UNITED NATIONS DATES: *Commemorations affirmed by the United Nations General Assembly*

1. *January 24*: Anniversary of UN General Assembly Resolution 1 (1). A consensus resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons and other WMD.
2. *August 29*: International Day Against Nuclear Tests. (Anniversary of the first Soviet nuclear test in 1949 and the date of closing the Soviet nuclear test site in Kazakhstan in 1991)
3. *September 21*: International Day for Peace
4. *September 26*: International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
5. *October 24-30*: UN Disarmament Week

OTHER KEY DATES

1. *March 1*: Nuclear Remembrance Day. (a day for acknowledging the victims of nuclear tests. Anniversary of the largest US nuclear test conducted in the Marshall Islands)
2. *May 24*. International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament
3. *August 6*: Anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima
4. *August 9*: Anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki

VII. **IPU resolutions relating to disarmament**

- *Advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and securing entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: The role of parliaments*. Adopted April 2009
- *Toward a Nuclear Weapon Free World: The Contribution of Parliaments*. Adopted March 2014
- *Cyber warfare: A serious threat to peace and global security*. Adopted April 2015

VIII. **Other relevant resources**

- *UNODA database of disarmament treaties*.
- *World table: monitoring arms control and disarmament agreements 2018*, produced by GCSP, IPU, SOAS and PNND.