

# Assuring our Common Future:

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

## Table of contents

### Acknowledgments

### Preface<sup>1</sup> and Message<sup>2</sup>

### Section A: DISARMAMENT FOR SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Chapter 1: The importance of parliamentary action

Chapter 2: Summary of *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*

Chapter 3: Disarmament in a post COVID-19 pandemic world

### Section B: GOOD PARLIAMENTARY PRACTICE: EXAMPLES AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

Chapter 1: Disarmament to save humanity

Chapter 2: Disarmament that saves lives

Chapter 3: Disarmament for future generations

Chapter 4: Strengthening partnerships

Chapter 5: Disarmament, climate protection and sustainable development

Chapter 6: Pandemics and disarmament, public health and economic sustainability

### Annexes:

- I. List of recommendations
- II. Champion and supporting countries for *Securing our Common Future*
- III. List of key disarmament treaties and agreements
- IV. List of relevant Security Council resolutions
- V. IPU resolutions relating to disarmament
- VI. Parliamentary resources on disarmament and non-proliferation
- VII. Disarmament and non-proliferation commemoration dates

### List of Tables

1. Summary of the Sustainable Development Goals and their relationship to disarmament
2. International humanitarian law, human rights law and disarmament
3. Selected jurisprudence relating to disarmament agreements and law

### References

---

<sup>1</sup> Proposal for a joint preface by the IPU President, PGA President, PFSALW President, one of the PNND Co-Presidents and the GCSP Director and WFC Chair.

<sup>2</sup> Proposal for an opening message to parliamentarians from the UN Secretary General or UN High Representative for Disarmament

# Assuring our Common Future:

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

## Section A: DISARMAMENT FOR SECURITY & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### Chapter 1: The importance of parliamentary action

In January 2020, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists moved the hands of the symbolic Doomsday Clock to 100 seconds to midnight, the closest ever to the possible end to civilisation from nuclear weapons or climate change. The increased threat from nuclear weapons comes as nuclear arms control agreements are collapsing, nuclear-armed States are developing new weapons systems, and conflicts between nuclear-armed States are becoming hotter. Meanwhile, governments are now spending nearly \$2 trillion per year on weapons and militaries, and over 1 billion small arms and light weapons are circulating world-wide causing the deaths of approximately 220 000 people every year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that neither nuclear weapons nor conventional weapons and armies can prevent the spread of pandemics, nor address their impact on public health and economies. Rather, the flow of weapons tends to stimulate armed conflict and hinder the implementation of public health measures in response to serious pandemics.

Nor do nuclear weapons, conventional weapons and large armies assist in addressing climate change or in achieving the sustainable development goals. Indeed, military operation are amongst the largest contributions to carbon emissions, and the financing of sustainable development goal (SDG) implementation struggles to be met whilst governments maintain excessively large military budgets. Climate action and implementation of SDGs are better served by disarmament, diplomacy and conflict resolution than continued militarization.

Parliamentary action is vital to shift national priorities from a military focus to stronger focus on human security, and to advance the key approaches in *Securing our Common Future* the disarmament agenda released by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, and to ensure the effective implementation and sustainability of disarmament policies and initiatives.

Parliaments and parliamentarians have responsibilities to authorise ratification of disarmament agreements & adopt national implementation measures, allocate budgets to support disarmament, monitor government's implementation of disarmament obligations, highlight and replicate exemplary policy and practice, and build cooperation between legislators and parliaments regionally and globally.

This handbook provides examples of good practice plus recommendations so that parliamentarians can take action to make a real difference and to *Assure our Common Future*.



### Role of parliaments

Parliaments, as the direct representatives of citizens have both norm-setting and oversight responsibilities to perform. They can use moral, fiscal and legislative pressure to make sure governments move the world closer to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The international networks created by parliamentarians have been successful in achieving progress and strengthening the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime, not just for nuclear weapons but for all weapons of mass destruction, and other weapons judged to be inhumane, such as landmines or cluster munitions.

- Ms Izumi Nakamitsu , UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs,  
New Zealand parliamentary symposium, 10 March 2020

## Chapter 2: Summary of *Securing our Common Future*

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 the proliferation of conventional weapons and integrating these efforts into the broader work on conflict prevention, peacebuilding and sustainable development. This strand also focuses on adherence to international humanitarian law in armed conflict

and on mitigating the humanitarian impact of conventional weapons, particularly posed by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA), the need to strengthen United Nations whole-of-system coordination on improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and the importance to create greater transparency and accountability on the use of armed drones. Disarmament that saves lives also focuses on efforts to reduce military spending and build confidence at regional levels through existing UN transparency and confidence-building instruments.

*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.

Since 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. Twenty 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.

## **Disarmament for security and sustainable development**

Weapons acquisition and accumulation is often perceived by nations as one of the tools to providing security. However, *Securing our common future* highlights many ways in which the reverse is true, and that weapons of mass destruction and uncontrolled and illicit circulation and excessive accumulation of conventional weapons erode security, while in contrast, disarmament contributes to security and sustainable development.

*Securing our Common Future* notes that disarmament of nuclear weapons and other WMD contributes to international peace and stability. *'Reversing the further deterioration of the international security environment requires a return to the mindset where the pursuit of nuclear disarmament is understood as the best means for preserving peace, preventing major inter-State war and maintaining stability in times of turbulence.'* (*Securing our Common Future*, p33).







*And the report notes that conventional disarmament measures build regional and national security including to help 'end conflicts, secure the peace and prevent the easy resumption of hostilities. They have promoted transparency, confidence and stability at the regional level, reducing the military burden on societies. They have ensured respect for the principles of humanity. And they have prevented diversion to malicious or unauthorized users.'* (*Securing our Common Future*, p33).

*Disarmament and arms control measures can help ensure national and human security in the 21st Century, and must be an integral part of our collective security system. I hope this disarmament agenda will help set our world on a path towards sustainable peace and security for all.*

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

*Securing our Common Future* also highlights that ‘there are many areas where achievement of disarmament objectives would benefit the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals’, and 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.

**Table 1: Summary of the Sustainable Development Goals and their relationship to disarmament** (based on pages 8 and 9 of *Securing our Common Future*)

 <p>3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>	<p>Armed violence is among the leading causes of premature death, and it victimizes even more people by spreading injuries, disability, psychological distress and disease. Disarmament and arms control reduce the impact of conflict on human health.</p>
 <p>4 QUALITY EDUCATION</p>	<p>Limiting the proliferation and uncontrolled circulation of weapons in communities contributes to safe and non-violent learning environments for all. Disarmament education contributes to education on peace and non-violence, conflict resolution, sustainable development, gender equality, economic justice, human rights and tolerance of cultural diversity</p>
 <p>5 GENDER EQUALITY</p>	<p>Young men are overwhelmingly responsible for the misuse of small arms. While men make up most direct casualties, women are more frequently victims of gender-based violence that small arms facilitate. Empowering women and ensuring their equal and meaningful participation in disarmament and arms control decision-making processes can lead to more inclusive, effective and sustainable policy outcomes.</p>
 <p>8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>	<p>Excessive military spending harms economic growth and can produce undesirable social and political consequences. Stemming the proliferation and easy availability of arms can counter the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Opportunities to build decent livelihoods can attract young men away from armed groups or gangs. Adequate arms regulation helps prevent illicit transfers of weapons in support of human trafficking, modern slavery or forced labour.</p>
 <p>10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>	<p>Measures for disarmament can reduce military expenditures and redirect public resources/spending towards social and economic initiatives that can contribute to greater equality.</p>
 <p>13 CLIMATE ACTION</p>	<p>The production, testing and use of weapons, as well as general military operations, contribute significantly to carbon emissions. The use of nuclear weapons could cause catastrophic climatic impact. Disarmament measures can help reduce this climate impact and support the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.<sup>3</sup></p>

<sup>3</sup> The benefits of disarmament for climate protection were not included in *Securing our Common Future*, but are a vital part of disarmament for sustainable development, and so are included in this parliamentary handbook.



Contamination from remnants of war and the testing and use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons have disastrous environmental consequences. Disarmament and arms regulation reduce the impact of weapons on the environment.



### **DISARMAMENT, NON-PROLIFERATION AND ARMS CONTROL PLAY A VITAL ROLE IN PREVENTING CONFLICT, AND IN FORGING AND SUSTAINING PEACE.**

**16.1** Disarmament and arms regulation contribute to reducing deaths from armed violence by prohibiting and restricting the use of certain types of weapons and by establishing effective controls of arms and ammunition.

**16.4** Effective disarmament and arms regulation reduce illicit arms flows, which can otherwise instigate, fuel and prolong armed conflict, terrorism and crime.

**16.6** Participation in military transparency and confidence-building measures, such as reporting on military spending and on arms imports and exports, promote accountability of national institutions and can foster cross-border dialogue and trust-building.

**16.8** The active engagement of all States, especially developing countries, in multilateral disarmament discussions leads to more effective and sustainable policy outcomes.

**16.9** Strengthening the institutional capacities of States to better control arms and ammunition and to engage in military confidence-building measures help prevent conflict, violence, terrorism and crime.



Mobilizing sufficient resources in support of disarmament and arms regulation is critical to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Increased availability of high-quality, timely, disaggregated and reliable arms-related data can inform discussions about the relationship between disarmament, development, peace and security, leading to better decisions and policies.

---

## Chapter 3: Disarmament in a post COVID-19 pandemic world

As the COVID-19 pandemic began spreading around the world in March and April 2020, it became increasingly clear that societies in armed conflict, and those that had prioritised investment in military security, were less able to contain and address the pandemic than societies that had prioritised human security and sustainable development, such as public health and education.

Neither nuclear weapons nor conventional weapons and armies could prevent the spread of the pandemic. Nor could they assist those infected by the virus. Nor could they address the economic impact of the virus such as job and income loss. Nor could they help re-build sustainable economies as the world began to emerge from the pandemic. In addition, the global flow of weapons, including small arms and light weapons, tends to exacerbate armed conflict and hinder peace efforts. In communities embroiled in armed conflict, it is virtually impossible to implement public health measures to contain and address the pandemic. In addition the effects and of the misuse of small arms and light weapons divert already-overstretched public health resources.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates the importance of prioritising investment in human security - cutting the exorbitant global military budget of \$1.9 trillion and re-investing this in public health and resilient economies.

The pandemic also highlights the importance of investing in peace processes to end armed conflicts. The UN Secretary-General in recognising this, launched a special global ceasefire initiative in March 2020, and gave additional impetus to UN special envoys to help facilitate ceasefires in regions of conflict regions.

Disarmament serves an important supporting role, by constraining armed conflict and by helping to reduce military budgets and free up resources for public health and human security.

## Public health and explosive weapons

*The use of explosive weapons in populated areas has left healthcare systems of entire societies bereft of the means to combat the pandemic. Global military spending reached record highs this year, as governments face an urgent need to redirect resources to economic recovery and effective job creation.*

**Ms Izumi Nakamitsu**

UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, 27 May 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic also demonstrates the importance of the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) and of measures to address biological weapons adopted in UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

The pandemic was not initiated by the intentional spread of the COVID-19 virus for military purposes, which the BWC and UNSC 1540 are designed to prevent and address. However, the pandemic demonstrates the catastrophic humanitarian and economic impact of the spread of novel virus' of a nature which could be used for military purposes, and the global cooperation and array of measures that would be required should biological weapons ever be used.

Until now, governments have been reluctant to grant the BWC sufficient authority or resources to properly address the threat of biological warfare. The treaty has no verification body and problematic enforcement measures, relying solely on the UN Security Council which can be blocked by any one of the five permanent members. The COVID-19 pandemic shines a light on these deficiencies, and could give rise to a revision and strengthening of the BWC.

In the meantime, the expertise, transparency mechanisms and examples of effective policy implementation generated by the BWC and UNSC 1540 with regard to control of biological agents and toxins can be helpful to pandemic prevention and mitigation. This could be assisted by further enhancing the cooperation between non-proliferation/disarmament and public health authorities at international and national levels.

## Section B: Good parliamentary practice: Examples and recommendations

### CHAPTER 1: DISARMAMENT TO SAVE HUMANITY

#### Introduction:

This section focuses on parliamentary action to prohibit and eliminate weapons of mass destruction – in particular nuclear, chemical and biological weapons – and on preventing the emergence of new strands of strategic competition and conflict, including in outer space.

#### Relevant international and bi-lateral agreements

- *Geneva Protocol of 1925 banning the use of chemical and biological weapons in war*
- *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 Resolutions 1540 and 2325*
- *Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties (START) between the United States and Russia*



- *Outer Space Treaty*
- *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)*

### Examples of good parliamentary 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, the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program 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)
2. Chemical weapons
3. Biological weapons
4. Outer Space:
 

(Examples might 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:

- *IPU resolution: [Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: The contribution of parliaments](#)*. Adopted by the 130<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, Geneva, 16-20 March 2014
- *IPU Resolution: [The role of parliaments in supervising the destruction of chemical weapons and the ban on their use](#)* adopted at the 129<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, Geneva, 7-9 October 2013
- *IPU Resolution: [Advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and securing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: The role of parliaments](#)*, Adopted at the 120<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly: Addis-Ababa, 5-10 April 2009
- *IPU resolution: [Importance of the non-proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction and of missiles, including the prevention of their use by terrorists](#)*, Adopted by the 108<sup>th</sup> Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, Santiago, 6-11 April 2003
- *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*, GCSP, IPU, SOAS & PNND.
- *UNODA database of disarmament treaties*.
- *PGA Global Parliamentary Campaign to Promote Universality and Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)*

## CHAPTER 2: DISARMAMENT THAT SAVES LIVES

### Introduction:

This section focuses on parliamentary action to regulate conventional arms accumulation, proliferation and use, based on humanitarian, security and legal objectives. These include mitigating the use of weapons, adherence to international human rights standards and humanitarian law, protecting civilians and supporting peace processes.

### Relevant international agreements:

- *Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Landmines Treaty), 1997*
- *Arms Trade Treaty, 2013*
- *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (Inhumane Weapons Convention), 1980*
- *Convention on Cluster Munitions, 2008*



- *Convention on Environmental Modification Techniques, 1976*
- *Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, 1990*
- *Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1905*
- *Inter-American Convention on Firearms, 1997*
- *Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol), 2001*
- *United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA), 2001*
- *Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa (Nairobi Protocol), 2004*
- *SADC Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials (SADC Protocol), 2004*
- *International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2005*
- *ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons (ECOWAS Convention), 2006*
- *Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (Bamako Declaration), 2000.*
- *African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by Year 2020 (Lusaka Master Roadmap), 2016*
- *Kinshasa Convention (on control of small arms and light weapons in Africa), 2010*

**Examples of good parliamentary practice: [to be completed]**

- *Control Arms Global Parliamentary Declaration on the Arms Trade Treaty*
- *International Parliamentary Appeal to prevent human suffering from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas <http://www.inew.org/parliamentary-appeal/>*

**Recommendations: [to be completed]**

**Resources:**

- *IPU resolution: [Cooperation and shared responsibility in the global fight against organized crime, in particular drug trafficking, illegal arms sales, trafficking in persons and cross-border terrorism](#), adopted by the 122<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly, Bangkok, 27 March – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010*
- *IPU resolution: [The role of parliaments in strengthening the control of trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition](#), adopted 114<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly: Nairobi, 7-12 May 2006*
- *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 (PFSALW);*
- *Small Arms and Violence against Women-Parliamentary handbook, produced by the PFSALW;*
- *World table: monitoring arms control and disarmament agreements, GCSP, IPU, SOAS & PNND;*
- *Model Law Model Law on Firearms, Ammunition on Firearms, Ammunition and Related Materials, produced by the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament in cooperation with the PFSALW;*
- *UNODA database of disarmament treaties.*
- *UN Register of Conventional Arms*
- *UN Report on Military Expenditures*
- *UN Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC)*
- *Compendium of activities, findings and outcomes on the “Gun Violence and Illicit SALW-Control from a Gender Perspective” Project, UNRCPD*

## CHAPTER 3: DISARMAMENT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

**Introduction:**

This section focuses on parliamentary action on new and emerging weapon technologies that could imperil the security of future generations, such as autonomous weapons systems and the use of force in cyber-space.

**Relevant international agreements:**

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

- *UN General Assembly resolution 73/27 establishing an Open Ended Working Group on information and telecommunications in the context of international security.*
- *Agreement by the States Parties of the Convention on Conventional Weapons to establish a Group of Government Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems*

### **Examples of good parliamentary practice and Recommendations:** [to be completed]

#### **Resources:**

- *IPU Resolution: CYBER WARFARE: A SERIOUS THREAT TO PEACE AND GLOBAL SECURITY*, adopted by consensus by the 132<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly, Hanoi, 1 April 2015.
- *Key elements of a Treaty on Fully Autonomous Weapons*, Campaign to stop Killer Robots, Nov 2019.
- *The Application of International Law to State Cyberattacks: Sovereignty and Non-Intervention*, Harriet Moynihan, Chatham House Cyber-Security Project, Dec 2019.
- *A Treaty for cyber-space*, Rex Hughes, Chatham House Cyber-Security Project. 2010.

## **CHAPTER 4: STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS**

### **Introduction:**

This section focuses on parliamentary action to engage key constituencies in disarmament processes including women, youth, religious leaders, business leaders, industry experts and other civil society representatives. This section also focuses on actions to strengthen the partnerships between the United Nations, parliamentarians and parliamentary organisations on disarmament issues.

### **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, and follow-up resolutions including Res 2493*
- *UN General Assembly resolution on Youth, Disarmament and Non-proliferation, 2019*
- *UN General Assembly resolution on Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, 2018*

### **Regional parliaments and Inter-parliamentary organisations**

The following is a list of regional parliaments and inter-parliamentary organisations in which dialogue, engagement and cooperative action of legislators on disarmament and security issues can be undertaken.

- *Inter-Parliamentary Union*
- *Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe*
- *Interparliamentary Assembly of Member Nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States*
- *European Parliament*
- *Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe*
- *Arab Parliament*
- *Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie*
- *ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly*
- *Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region*
- *Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (PARLATINO)*
- *East African Legislative Assembly*
- *Parliament of the Economic Community of West African States*
- *Pan-African Parliament*
- *Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean*

### **Examples of good parliamentary practice:** [to be completed]

- *A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Our Common Good.* Joint statement by parliamentarians, mayors and religious leaders to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the onset of the nuclear age and the foundation of the United Nations, August 6, 2015
- *Common security for a sustainable and nuclear-weapon-free world.* Joint appeal by women legislators in support of the UNSG's disarmament agenda; May 24, 2018
- *IPU Regional seminar on parliaments and the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540 for Pacific Island Parliaments*, Sep 2019.

**Recommendations:** [to be completed]

**Resources:** [to be completed]

## CHAPTER 5: DISARMAMENT, CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

### Introduction:

This section focuses on parliamentary action to advance disarmament for climate protection and sustainable development including integrating disarmament into SDG dialogues, processes and forums. It also includes parliamentary action to cut weapons budgets and investments and shift these to support the SDGs. And it includes parliamentary oversight on the carbon footprint of the military.

### Relevant international agreements:

- *Article 26 of the UN Charter*
- *UN Sustainable Development Goals, adopted 2015*
- *Paris Agreement on Climate Change, adopted 2016*
- *Final Document of the UN Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, 1987*  
<https://www.un.org/disarmament/publications/library/disarmament-and-development/>
- *UNGA resolution 74/57: Relationship between disarmament and development, adopted 2019*

**Examples of good parliamentary practice:** [to be completed]

**Recommendations:** [to be completed]

### Resources:

- IPU declaration: [Placing democracy at the service of peace and sustainable development: Building the world the people want](#), Adopted by the 4<sup>th</sup> World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, U.N, Sept. 2015
- *Move the Nuclear Weapons Money, A handbook for civil society and legislators*. Published by IPB, PNND and the World Future Council, 2016
- *The Carbon Footprint of the Military*, Scientists for Global Responsibility, July 2019
- *Demilitarization for Deep Decarbonization: Reducing Militarism and Military Expenditures to Invest in the UN Green Climate Fund to Create Low-Carbon Economies & Resilient Communities*. Tamara Lorincz, IPB, 2014
- *Warfare or Welfare: Disarmament for Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Published by the International Peace Bureau, 2005.
- *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*. Published by the United Nations and the World Bank. Washington, DC. 2018.
- *Rethinking Unconstrained Military Spending*, UNODA Occasional Papers No. 35, April 2020

### Military spending, climate change and sustainable development

In 2020, we start the 10-year countdown to delivering on the SDGs. Reining in unconstrained military spending would go a long way in freeing up crucial human, financial and technological resources urgently needed for this “decade of action” to transform our world. It is estimated that the true cost of addressing the devastating effects of climate change in developing countries is \$56-73 billion per year. If only 10 per cent of today’s global military spending were spent towards SDG 13 on climate action, the current costs of adapting to climate change in developing countries would be covered several times over.

On the occasion of the Global Days of Action on Military Spending, I echo the recent appeal of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire in the face of the ongoing health crisis. I also renew my call for the international community to redirect the world’s finite resources towards promoting the well-being of every citizen and striving for a peaceful and secure world for all. Let us put humanity at the centre of our security.

- Ms Izumi Nakamitsu , UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, April 9, 2020

## CHAPTER 6: PANDEMICS AND DISARMAMENT, PUBLIC HEALTH AND ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

### Introduction:

This section focuses on parliamentary action on disarmament to support public health, peace and economic sustainability in relation to pandemic prevention, management and mitigation.

### Relevant international agreements and initiatives:

- **UNGA resolution 74/270:** *Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease*, March 2020
- **UNGA Resolution 74/274:** *International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19*, March 2020
- **WHA resolution 73/1.** *COVID-19 Response*, May 2020
- **UN Secretary-General's initiative for a Global Ceasefire**, March 2020
- **Biological Weapons Convention**

### Examples of good parliamentary practice: [to be completed]

- *Senator Markey letter to President Trump proposing use of the Defense Production Act of 1950 to step up industrial production of ventilators, virus tests and other pandemic related medical supplies*, March 2020;
- *Human security for public health, peace and sustainable development*, a joint appeal of women legislators, religious leaders and leaders of civil society organisations in support of United Nations' initiatives for peace, disarmament and COVID-19 management and mitigation. May 24, 2020.

### Recommendations: [to be completed]

### Resources: [to be completed]

---

## Table 2: International Humanitarian Law, Human Rights Law and Disarmament

### International humanitarian law

International humanitarian law (IHL) regulates the actions of states in conducting warfare; it serves in particular to protect civilians and other non-combatants from the effects of warfare. It is a major part of the international law of armed conflict.

IHL core principles are set out in widely ratified treaties, most notably the Geneva Conventions of 1949, Geneva Protocols of 1977 and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons of 1980 (Inhumane Weapons Convention). They are integrated into the military law provisions of most countries, and are accepted as binding international law, applicable in wartime even when a state is not party to relevant international treaties. They include the principles of:

- *Distinction – it is prohibited to attack civilians and other non-combatants as well as civilian infrastructure;*
- *Discrimination – it is prohibited to carry out attacks that indiscriminately harm civilians and other non-combatants as well as civilian infrastructure;*
- *Humanity – it is prohibited to inflict unnecessary suffering and superfluous injury on combatants;*
- *Environmental protection - it is prohibited to attack the environment as a form of reprisal, or to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the environment.*

### Human Rights Law

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) is a major human rights treaty with 117 states parties, including every nuclear-armed state except China. Article 6(1) of the Covenant provides: "Every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life."

On October 30, 2018, the UN Human Rights Committee, a body established by the ICCPR, adopted General Comment (no. 36) on the right to life set out in Article 6. The committee affirmed that the Right to Life is an

*'entitlement of individuals to be free from acts and omissions that are intended or may be expected to cause their unnatural or premature death, as well as to enjoy a life with dignity', and that this is a 'supreme right from which no derogation is permitted even in situations of armed conflict and other public emergencies which threatens the life of the nation.'* This right is *'the prerequisite for the enjoyment of all other human rights.'*

## **Application of IHL and Human Rights Law to Disarmament**

IHL and Human Rights law usually apply to the **methods of warfare** and the **use of weapons**, not specifically to prohibitions on production or possession of the weapons or obligations to disarm.

However, there is a principle that if the use of a weapons system would generally violate IHL and/or human rights law, then there is an obligation to prohibit and eliminate that weapon. This connection between Human Rights Law/IHL and **disarmament** is recognized in a number of treaties, as well as by the International Court of Justice and the Human Rights Committee. It is also recognized in various places in the UNSG's Disarmament Agenda.

The Preamble of the **Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)**, for example, notes that the provisions of IHL provide a basis to *'prohibit or restrict further the use of certain conventional weapons... with a view to putting an end to the production, stockpiling and proliferation of such weapons.'*

The **Human Rights Committee General Comment 36**, after affirming that the threat or use of weapons of mass destruction would violate the Right to Life, concludes therefore that *'States parties must take all necessary measures to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including measures to prevent their acquisition by non-state actors, to refrain from developing, producing, testing, acquiring, stockpiling, selling, transferring and using them, to destroy existing stockpiles, and to take adequate measures of protection against accidental use, all in accordance with their international obligations.'*

The **International Court of Justice**, in its 1996 Advisory Opinion on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, after affirming that *'that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law'*, then concluded unanimously that *'There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.'*

The **UNSG's Disarmament Agenda** notes that *'In order to give greater clarity and expression to the general rules of international law, the international community has also sought to progressively codify and develop rules to prohibit and restrict specific types of weapons, due to their disproportionate, uncontrollable or inhumane effects.'* This has led to international treaties to prohibit biological, chemical and nuclear weapons, as well as landmines and cluster munitions, and a protocol to the CCW to prohibit blinding laser weapons.

## **Further application of IHL and Human Rights Law to nuclear disarmament**

Nuclear-armed states and their allies acknowledge that IHL applies to use of nuclear arms as it does to any act of war. That creates an opening to oppose reliance on nuclear weapons as irreconcilable with our common humanity. This is supported by additional references to the IHL and Human Rights imperatives to achieve nuclear disarmament:

The **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)** and the **International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement** are considered to be leading authorities and guardians of IHL. They have given particular attention to the application of IHL to nuclear weapons and the imperative this gives to nuclear disarmament. This has included ICRC statements to the United Nations and International Court of Justice (1995) and resolutions adopted by the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in 1948, 1952, 1957, 1965, 1969, 1977, 1981, 2009 and 2011. In their 2011 resolution, for example, the Council of Delegates *"finds it difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian law, in particular the rules of distinction, precaution and proportionality,"* and calls on States therefore *'to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement, based on existing commitments and international obligations.'*

The **2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons** in its preamble considers that *any use of nuclear weapons would be contrary to IHL*, and also reaffirms that *any use of nuclear weapons would be "abhorrent to the principles of humanity and the dictates of public conscience,"* factors with legal as well as moral value. This is

provided as one of the principal reasons for the goal of the treaty to achieve ‘a legally binding prohibition of nuclear weapons.’

The **UN Human Rights Committee**, in General Comment 36 (see above), highlighted the application of the Right to Life to nuclear disarmament by affirming that States ‘*must also respect their international obligations to pursue in good faith negotiations in order to achieve the aim of **nuclear disarmament** under strict and effective international control and to afford adequate reparation to victims whose right to life has been or is being adversely affected by the testing or use of weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with principles of international responsibility.*’

---

## Annexes:

### I. List 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
France	Establishing a dedicated trust fund on small arms
India	New weapon technologies, responsible application of science and technology
Japan	Establishing a dedicated trust fund on small arms
New Zealand	Reducing nuclear risks, establishing a dedicated trust fund on small arms, explosive weapons in populated areas.

### III. List of key international disarmament treaties and agreements

*Note: Additional regional agreements are included in the chapters relating to those agreements above, and especially regional agreements relating to small arms and light weapons, Section B, Chapter 2.*

- Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, 1997
- Arms Trade Treaty, 2013
- Bangkok Treaty (South East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone), 1995
- Biological Weapons Convention, 1972
- Central Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, 2006
- Chemical Weapons Convention, 1992
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, 1996
- Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, 1980
- Convention on Cluster Munitions, 2008
- Convention on Environmental Modification Techniques, 1976
- Inter-American Convention on Firearms, 1997
- International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2005
- Pelindaba Treaty (Africa Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone), 1986
- Rarotonga Treaty (South Pacific Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone), 1986
- Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), 1990
- Treaty of Tlatelolco (Latin America and Caribbean Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone), 1967
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), 1969
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, 2017
- UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA), 2001
- UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol), 2001

### IV. List of relevant Security Council resolutions

[to be completed]

### V. IPU resolutions relating to disarmament

- *Cyber warfare: A serious threat to peace and global security.* Adopted at the 132<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly, Hanoi, 28 March-1 April 2015;
- *Toward a Nuclear Weapon Free World: The Contribution of Parliaments.* Adopted at the 130<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, Geneva, 16-20 March, 2014;
- *The role of parliaments in supervising the destruction of chemical weapons and the ban on their use,* Adopted at the 129<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly, Geneva, 7-9 October 2013;
- *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;
- *Advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, and securing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty: The role of parliaments,* Adopted at the 120<sup>th</sup> IPU Assembly: Addis-Ababa, 5-10 April 2009;
- *The role of parliaments in strengthening the control of trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition,* Adopted at 114<sup>nd</sup> IPU Assembly: Nairobi, 7-12 May 2006.

### VI. 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 PFSALW.
- *Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapons Free World*, developed by PNND in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2017.
- *Model Law Model Law on Firearms, Ammunition on Firearms, Ammunition and Related Materials* commissioned by the Latin American Parliament and developed by PFSALW in cooperation with the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation (SweFOR) and the Latin American organisations Coalición Latinoamericana para la Prevención de la Violencia Armada (CLAVE) and Viva Rio.

## VII. 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. *Mid-April*. Global days of action on military spending
3. *May 24*. International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament
4. *Second week of June*: Global Week of Action on Gun Violence
5. *July 9*: International Gun Destruction Day
6. *August 6*: Anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima
7. *August 9*: Anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki
8. *November 30*. Day of Remembrance for all Victims of Chemical Warfare (the day is established by the Conference of States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention)