

PNND activities in the region of CIS countries

Marzhan Nurzhan (given time – 10 min)

Use of weapons in modern conflicts: humanitarian aspects

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Dear colleagues,

Thank you for invitation to the conference.

Introduction to PNND

Let me first introduce organization that I am representing. PNND stands for Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, it unites over 800 parliamentarians in 75 countries to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and achieve their total elimination. PNND is organization with no political affiliation; it is aimed to unite parliamentarians in national and international levels in order to jointly work in the field of nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament issues by sharing information and resources to design common strategies and demonstrate initiatives to act. PNND is a network that connects parliamentarians by providing information on international events including United Nations disarmament meetings, samples of parliamentary resolutions, motions, questions and legislation from around the world. PNND creates a platform for parliaments to interact and develop collective plan of actions on international initiatives such as implementation of the Non Proliferation Treaty disarmament obligations, NATO Review and United Nations resolutions engaging non-governmental experts as well.

Nuclear risks and threats

Parliamentary action on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament is very important in light of the increased tensions between nuclear-armed States, including Russia and NATO and in North East Asia. Such tensions could lead to the use of nuclear weapons by accident or miscalculation. Or terrorists could infiltrate a command and control system leading to an inadvertent use of nuclear weapons. These risks have led the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists to set their 'Doomsday Clock' to three minutes to midnight.

Parliamentarians can play a vital role, meeting with other parliamentarians, to help ease tensions, build dialogue and put forward concrete proposals to reduce nuclear dangers and advance nuclear disarmament.

The humanitarian initiative

Recent studies and international conferences have highlighted the fact that any use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic impact on human health, the environment, and on financial and communications systems vital for civilization in the 21st Century. This establishes an imperative to prevent any use of nuclear weapons. Parliamentarians can advance initiatives for this. Interim measures are required, such as the adoption of policies never to use nuclear weapons first, followed by a global prohibition on the use of nuclear weapons. Already, the International Court of Justice has affirmed that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is

generally illegal. This should be affirmed by the nuclear armed States, and then codified in an international treaty. Once a global agreement prohibiting use of nuclear weapons is obtained, it will be possible to negotiate for their complete elimination.

Eliminating the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines

A barrier to prohibiting the threat or use of nuclear weapons is that the nuclear armed States and the NATO allies still rely on nuclear deterrence for their security. PNND is working with the Inter-Parliamentary Union to highlight alternatives to nuclear deterrence in order to achieve security. This includes use of international law, legal mechanisms and cooperative security to resolve conflicts and prevent aggression. The United Nations and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) have such mechanisms available and should be used more often to help resolve conflicts rather than increasing the reliance on the threat or use of force. The IPU has therefore adopted a resolution – endorsed by all member parliaments – calling on parliaments to work with governments to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and commence multilateral negotiations for nuclear disarmament.

Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE

The Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE has adopted resolutions at its annual assemblies in 2015 and 2016, endorsed by all member parliaments, supporting no-first-use policies, calling for an end to nuclear threat postures and supporting multilateral negotiations for nuclear disarmament in 2017. The OSCE PA includes the parliaments of all CIS states as well as the European states, Canada and the United States.

PNND, OSCE PA and the IPU

PNND played a vital role in proposing the resolutions at the IPU and OSCE PA, and in the deliberations to bring about their adoption. In addition, PNND Co-President Saber Chowdhury serves as the President of the Inter Parliamentary Union, and PNND Co-President Christine Muttonen serves as the President of the OSCE PA. Both leaders are working with PNND to help parliaments follow-up on these resolutions. This includes briefing papers, publications and electronic updates for parliamentarians on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, such as the PNND/IPU Handbook for Parliamentarians, the Russian version of which was launched at a previous session of the Inter Parliamentary Assembly of the CIS countries.

PNND and Astana Conference

PNND is playing active role in the issues of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in the world arena by being involved in numerous initiatives. Especially, recent actions were connected with the region of CIS countries. PNND along with Kazakh Senate and Ministry of the Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan co-hosted international conference “Building a Nuclear weapon free world” dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the closing the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site which took place in the capital of Kazakhstan - Astana on 29th of August, the International Day against nuclear tests. This conference brought together 200 legislators, religious leaders, government officials, diplomats, veterans, representatives of international organizations,

academics, scientists, medical professionals, lawyers, and nuclear disarmament campaigners from around the world, including local participants to commemorate the day – which was also the 25th anniversary of the closing of the Soviet nuclear test site in Kazakhstan. This collaboration between them was intended to build political will which is crucial on the way to the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. As a result the conference adopted a declaration Astana Vision: From Radioactive Haze to a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World with 10 action points. These included proposals for action by the UN Security Council to ban nuclear tests, support for multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations in 2017, a call for the adoption of no-first-use policies, and a call for the elimination of nuclear weapons no later than 2045, the 100th anniversary of the United Nations.

Cooperation with mayors and religious leaders

The transition from security relying on nuclear deterrence to one based more strongly on international law and cooperative security will require support from various constituencies in addition to governments and parliamentarians. PNND, therefore, has a cooperative project with Mayors for Peace which represents over 7000 cities around the world, and Religions for Peace which includes leaders of all the main religions. Our joint statement - A Nuclear Weapon Free World: Our Common Good – is available for endorsement by mayors, parliamentarians and religious leaders in CIS countries as well as in other regions. We plan to present this to the new UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, once he takes up his position in January 2017, to ensure that nuclear disarmament remains a key priority for the United Nations.

PNND and Atom Project

PNND is active in promoting the humanitarian and environmental consequences of nuclear weapons to parliamentarians in order to educate them on the issue by making the link between such consequences and the impulse to act for nuclear abolition. The seriousness of the issue makes parliamentarians to pay significant attention and elevate it amongst their list of priorities and responsibilities. One of the main activities in this program has been the promotion of the ATOM project launched in August 2012 during PNND Assembly. It is an international campaign that is aimed to go beyond than just creating awareness about the existence and threat of nuclear weapons testing having humanitarian and environmental impact they can cause. Atom project hopes to form real influence by engaging millions of people from all around the world in order to stand against nuclear weapons by signing petition and joining actions to preserve humankind from the danger that testing creates. At the moment there are around 300.000 signatures, however aim is to reach 1 mln.

Conclusion

PNND thanks the organisers of this conference for the opportunity to present on the role of parliamentarians and nuclear disarmament. We are open for membership from any parliamentarians participating in the conference. And we look forward to continuing our cooperation with the Inter Parliamentary Assembly of CIS countries.