



ASSURING OUR COMMON FUTURE

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

Parliamentary handbook on implementation of Securing our Common Future,
the UN Secretary-General's disarmament agenda

www.DisarmamentHandbook.org

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Introduction

This guide to parliamentary action in support of disarmament for security and sustainable development has been produced by the partner organisations in order to educate and engage legislators (parliamentarians) in all fields of disarmament, including of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, other inhumane weapons, small arms and light weapons, other conventional weapons and emerging weapons.

The approach and focus of the guide draws primarily from **Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament**, a report released by the United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) in 2018 and followed up by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) with guidelines and support for implementation.

The parliamentary guide offers recommendations and examples of parliamentary action and exemplary policy relating to the disarmament issues and goals outlined in the UNSG's report. In addition it includes a section on disarmament and public health in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, also with recommendations and examples of policy and parliamentary action.

In preparation for this guide, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) organised a number of consultation events (physical and virtual) involving legislators, disarmament experts, United Nations officials, representatives of treaty bodies including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, and representatives of UN member states, key civil society organisations and the publishing partners. Feedback from these events has contributed to the guide.

This guide, like the UN Secretary-General's report, covers a broad spectrum of disarmament issues. There is not the space in this guide to go into details, or offer a comprehensive set of recommendations and examples of parliamentary practice, for each disarmament issue. Instead, the guide provides an overview of issues and parliamentary action, draws examples from resources on specific disarmament issues produced for legislators by the partner organisations, and encourages legislators interested and active in those issues to consult those specific resources for more information.



UN Secretary-General **António Guterres** briefs press on his agenda for disarmament *Securing Our Common Future* in Geneva, 27 February 2017.
Photo: UN Photo / Jean-Marc Ferré

Preface

The United Nations was established 75 years ago, emerging from the rubble of the Second World War with a primary goal to “save succeeding generations from the scourge of war” and a secondary goal to “promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources”.

In order to advance the goal of disarmament, UN Secretary-General António Guterres released a report in 2018 entitled *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*. The report outlines a set of practical measures across the entire range of disarmament issues, including weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms and future weapon technologies. It also draws the connections between disarmament, peace and sustainable development.

Engagement of parliamentarians from across the political spectrum is vital to take forward these disarmament measures in order to enhance peace, security, democracy and economic wellbeing of people around the world, and to protect the planet.

The importance of disarmament has become even more self-evident in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Armed conflict and flows of arms that fuel armed conflict, prevent or subvert the public health measures required to control pandemics. In addition, large military budgets drain the financial resources required for economic recovery. Good public health systems, science and evidence-based policies, international cooperation, informed civil society and peace are the ‘weapons’ to combat pandemics, not guns or bombs.

We encourage parliamentarians everywhere to use the background information, recommendations, policy examples and additional resources in this handbook to advance disarmament initiatives which are relevant to their respective national and regional situations. And we encourage members of civil society to inform and support their elected representatives to take such action on their behalf.

Together we can build a more peaceful, less weaponized world for the benefit of current and future generations.



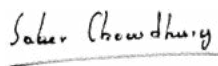
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Section A: **Disarmament for Security & Sustainable Development**

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 it has ever been to the possible end of civilisation. Explaining the move, the group cited two parallel existential threats that humanity faces: nuclear war and 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 worldwide, 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 infectious diseases, 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 required to respond 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 operations are amongst the largest contributions to carbon emissions. And the financing for implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 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 militarisation.

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

Parliaments and parliamentarians have responsibilities to authorise ratification of disarmament agreements and 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.

Izumi Nakamitsu, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, New Zealand parliamentary symposium, March 10, 2020.
Photo: UN Photo / Mark Garten

Summary of **Securing our Common Future**

On May 28, 2018, UN Secretary-General António 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 weaponisation, 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 **António 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*



António Guterres,
United Nations Secretary-General.
Photo: UN Photo / Mark Garten



Summary of 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 **António 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 **António 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 **António 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 organisations – as well as engaging women and youth in disarmament processes and building understanding, interest and engagement from the general public.

Since the release of *Securing our Common Future*, the UN Secretary-General and the United Nations Office for 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 for 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*, p. 17).

And the report notes that conventional disarmament measures build regional and national security, including by helping to *'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*, p. 33).

” 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 António 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.

INFO BOX 1:**Summary of the Sustainable Development Goals and their relationship to disarmament**

Based on pages 8 and 9 of *Securing our Common Future*



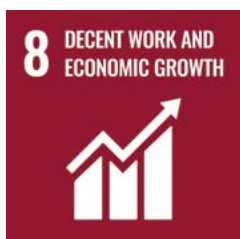
Armed violence is among the leading causes of premature death, and it victimises even more people by spreading injuries, disability, psychological distress and disease. Disarmament and arms control reduce the impact of conflict on human health.



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.



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.



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.



Measures for disarmament can reduce military expenditures and redirect public resources/spending towards social and economic initiatives that can contribute to greater equality.



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.

(Note: 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.



Mobilising 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.

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 measures of human security and sustainable development, such as public health and education.

Neither nuclear nor conventional weapons and armies can prevent the spread of such infectious diseases. Nor can they assist those infected. Nor can they address the economic impact of pandemics, such as job and income losses. Nor can they help rebuild sustainable economies as the world emerges from pandemics. 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 such pandemics. In addition, the effects and 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 rather than focusing primarily on bolstering military security. Indeed, a considerable portion of the exorbitant global military budget of \$1.9 trillion should be reinvested into strengthening public health and building resilient economies. The pandemic also highlights the importance of investing in peace processes to end armed conflicts. Recognising this, the UN Secretary-General launched a special global ceasefire initiative in March 2020, and gave additional impetus to UN special envoys to help facilitate ceasefires in 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.

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 prevent the spread of 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 a 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 its 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.

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Section B: **Good Parliamentary Practice, Recommendations and Examples**

Introduction

In this section of the handbook we offer some recommendations for parliamentary action and some examples of effective parliamentary practice. It is not possible in the space of this handbook to be comprehensive in each and every disarmament issue. Rather, we point to parliamentary guides and other resources on specific disarmament issues, which legislators can consult for further information and action.



INFO BOX 2:

Types of parliamentary actions

- Resolutions, motions and legislation adopted by parliament;
- Budgetary decisions in the nuclear-armed States on their nuclear weapons programmes;
- Budgetary decisions in all parliaments on supporting nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament treaties, mechanisms and initiatives;
- Questions, hearings and debates in parliament;
- Parliamentary commemorations of key days;
- Hearings, debates, panels and resolutions in inter-parliamentary bodies including the Inter-Parliamentary Union, NATO Parliamentary Assembly, OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States;
- Participation in government delegations to sessions of the UN, treaty negotiations and treaty review/implementation conferences (such as the NPT Review Conferences);
- Joint letters/statements with parliamentary colleagues globally or regionally;
- Joint events with civil society constituencies;
- Social media actions and promotion.

Excerpted from [Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World](#), PNNP 2017



CHAPTER 1: **DISARMAMENT TO SAVE HUMANITY**

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.



Nuclear weapons

Relevant international, regional and bi-lateral agreements:

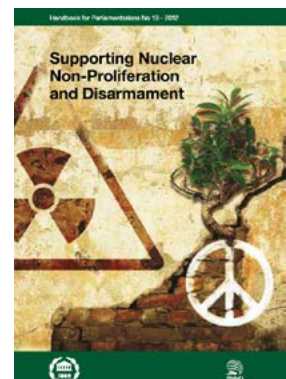
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), 1968
- Treaties for establishing nuclear weapon-free zones in Africa (1996), Antarctica (1959), Central Asia (2006), Latin America and the Caribbean (1967), the Pacific (1985) and Southeast Asia (1995)
- Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), 1996
- UN Security Council Resolution 2310 (supporting the CTBT), 2016
- International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, 2005
- UN Security Council Resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016)
- Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and Russia, 2010
- Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), 2017

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians and parliaments can:

- Support the full ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty;
- Ensure adequate assistance to victims and environmental remediation from nuclear tests;
- Support negotiations on a fissile materials treaty;
- Urge the nuclear-armed States to reduce the operational readiness to use nuclear weapons, and to make deeper, faster and irreversible cuts to all types of nuclear weapons;
- Work with governments to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines;
- Promote the establishment of additional nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially one in the Middle East;
- Work with their governments and civil society to strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and ensure success of the NPT Review Conferences;
- Urge their governments to commence negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or a similar package of agreements for the phased prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international control;
- Encourage governments, especially of non-nuclear States, to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and adopt effective national implementation measures;
- Cooperate with civil society to build awareness about nuclear weapons risks and the need for nuclear disarmament, including through commemoration of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and other relevant days;
- Examine national budgets to facilitate these goals.

Note: These recommendations are drawn from disarmament resolutions adopted by consensus by the Inter-Parliamentary Union (179 member parliaments), declarations adopted by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (56 member parliaments) and recommendations in the *Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon Free World* (2017) and the *IPU/PNND Handbook for Parliamentarians on Supporting Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament* (2012).



General Resources:

- [Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon Free World](#), published by PNND, 2017
- IPU Resolution: [Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: The contribution of parliaments](#), adopted by the 130th IPU Assembly, Geneva, March 2014
- [Handbook for Parliamentarians: Supporting Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament](#), published by IPU and PNND, 2012
- 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 by the 120th IPU Assembly: Addis-Ababa, April 2009
- [World table: monitoring arms control and disarmament agreements](#), GCSP, IPU, SOAS & PNND
- [UNODA database of disarmament treaties](#)

Examples of good parliamentary practice:

1. NUCLEAR RISK REDUCTION AND LOWERING THE ROLE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

OSCE PA declaration on détente, diplomacy and no-first-use

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE PA) adopts a declaration each year at its Annual Session in July. In 2018, the Assembly adopted the [Berlin declaration](#) which calls on nuclear-armed States and their allies to agree to no-first-use of nuclear weapons, adopt other disarmament and confidence-building measures, increase direct military-to-military contacts, and engage in structured dialogue to address the serious conflicts in the region. The declaration promotes mediation and dialogue as *'cost-effective ways of preventing, managing and resolving violent conflicts,'* and highlights OSCE processes that are already helping to manage the conflicts, but need further political support for full success. The OSCE PA presented the declaration to the OSCE Ministerial Council, which includes the Foreign Ministers of all 57 OSCE member states (France, Russia, UK, US and all other NATO, European and former Soviet countries).



The increased threats of nuclear-weapons-use by accident, miscalculation or intent led the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists earlier this year to move the hands of the Doomsday Clock this year to 2 Minutes to Midnight. Nuclear reliant governments must reverse these trends by taking all weapons systems off high alert, committing to never use nuclear weapons first, and commencing negotiations on the complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, as urged by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

Margret Kiener Nellen MP, President of the Swiss delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly 2018-2019

No-first-use resolutions in US federal and state legislatures

In response to increasing conflicts between the nuclear-armed States since 2016, and threats by leaders (especially of the US, North Korea and Russia) to launch a nuclear attack, legislators in the United States have introduced resolutions calling for a US policy committed to never launching a nuclear war (no-first-use) and using diplomacy rather than nuclear threats to respond to and resolve these conflicts. Federal resolutions include the No-First-Use Act introduced into the Senate in January 2019 by Elizabeth Warren ([S.272](#)) and into the House of Representatives by Adam Smith ([H.R.921](#)), and the No Unconstitutional War with North Korea Act of 2020 introduced into the Senate by Ed Markey ([S.4020](#)) and in the House of Representatives by Ro Khanna ([H.R.6639](#)). It also includes resolutions in some State legislatures including, [HR0061](#) introduced in the Illinois State Legislature by Representative Carol Ammons and adopted on May 15, 2019.



The passage of legislation like this is momentous and crucial because it demonstrates that the voices of US communities are not irrelevant or powerless on issues of national security, and it sets the US on a path away from nuclear war and towards multilateral disarmament and international peace.

US Representative Carol Ammons, Illinois State Legislature

US Senate hearing on the authority to launch a nuclear war

On November 14, 2017, the US Senate held a [full committee hearing on the authority to order the use of nuclear weapons](#). This was the first such hearing in the US Senate since 1976. The hearing examined questions on the sole authority of the President to launch a nuclear attack, including the first use of nuclear weapons, whether there are any political and legal limits to this authority, and the chain of command in executing such an order. The hearing was held in response to the demand from Democratic and Republican senators to the Chair of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, arising from their concern about deteriorating relations between the US and other nuclear-armed States, in particular North Korea and Russia, that might prompt the US President to launch a nuclear attack.



Nuclear weapons are for deterrence, not war-fighting. Launching nuclear weapons first would be an unprecedented act of aggression. Any first-use of nuclear weapons would evolve into retaliatory strikes causing unimaginable death and suffering. Absent a nuclear weapons attack on the US or our allies, no one human being should have the power to unilaterally unleash the most destructive forces ever devised by humankind. Yet, under existing (US) laws the President of the USA can start a nuclear war without provocation, without consultation and without warning. It boggles the rational mind.

US Senator Ed Markey. Testimony to the US Senate Hearing on Authority to Order the Use of Nuclear Weapons, November 14, 2017. Photo: US Senate

Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

In 1991 the US Senate adopted the *Soviet Nuclear Threat Reduction Act of 1991*, co-authored by Senators Richard Lugar (Republican) and Sam Nunn (Democrat). The Act provides US technical and financial support for the storage, transportation, dismantling, and destruction of nuclear weapons and control of fissile material in former Soviet republics. It was established in order to prevent the seizure, theft, sale, or use of nuclear weapons or components following the break-up of the Soviet Union. The [Cooperative Threat Reduction Program](#), facilitated by the Nunn-Lugar Act and implemented in cooperation with the Russian Federation and other former Soviet states, has been incredibly successful, leading to the dismantling, removal and/or elimination of nuclear weapons in Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine, and the securing of nuclear weapons materials in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

Resources

- [Dialogue, détente and disarmament: The role of parliaments and the OSCE](#) (also available in [French](#))
- [Global Zero FAQs \(questions and answers\) on No-First-Use](#)
- [IPU Handbook for Parliamentarians: Supporting Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament](#), Chapter 3

2. NON-PROLIFERATION, ARMS CONTROL AND PREVENTION OF A NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

UK 2019 House of Lords Inquiry on Rising nuclear risks, disarmament and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

During February 2019, the UK House of Lords conducted an inquiry on the issue of *Rising nuclear risks, disarmament and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty*, which included deliberations, as well as hearings with disarmament experts and representatives of civil society organisations. The Select Committee on International Relations and Defence produced a [report based on this inquiry](#) which was released on April 24, 2019. A [government response](#) was published on July 4, 2019. This was followed by a debate in the House of Lords on July 16, 2019. The inquiry is a good example of a parliamentary process that engaged experts, civil society representatives and the government, as well as open debate in order to achieve a credible and useful outcome. Conclusions and recommendations of the Report included:

- The risk of the use of nuclear weapons has increased, in the context of rising inter-state competition, a more multipolar world, and the development of new capabilities and technologies.
- Nuclear possessor states should commit to the principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, and do all they can to reduce global tensions, support nuclear non-proliferation, and pursue nuclear disarmament
- While it's understandable that the UK will remain opposed to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, its proponents have legitimate concerns about the pace of disarmament and nuclear risk, and the Government should adopt a less aggressive tone towards it;
- The Government should make clear to the US Administration the value of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) for Euro-Atlantic security, and advocate its extension.
- The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is at the core of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime. As such the UK should be represented at the next NPT Review Conference at the highest relevant level (by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs) and use this opportunity to increase transparency and dialogue between the nuclear-armed States and to take further measures to reduce the risk of nuclear use through misunderstanding and miscalculation.



This report may be from 2019, but it is even more topical and relevant now than then. The extension of New Start is essential if risks are not to grow even further. And the need for the nuclear powers to engage in a serious and detailed discussion of strategic stability is an urgent one.

Lord David Hannay, Member of the House of Lords Select Committee on International Relations and Defence

European Parliament Resolution on the 2020 NPT Review Conference

On February 19, 2020, the European Parliament adopted a [Recommendation to the European Council and the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on Preparation of the 2020 Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Treaty \(NPT\) review process, nuclear arms control and nuclear disarmament options](#). The recommendation, amongst other things: called on States Parties to the NPT to reaffirm that a ‘*nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought*’; called on Russia and the US to extend the new START Treaty and commence negotiations on an agreement on short and medium range nuclear missiles in light of the collapse of the INF Treaty; affirmed political and financial support for the process for establishing a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone; affirmed support for the Stockholm Initiative for incremental disarmament measures; reaffirmed the EU’s commitment to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as the best possible means for obtaining assurances of an exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy by Iran; and called for entry-into-force of the CTBT.



U.S. Congress delegation in the Russian Federation Council. Photo: council.gov.ru / Wikimedia

Dialogue between Russian and US legislators on nuclear arms control

The Russian parliamentary group for relations with the US Congress was established to support dialogue between Russian and US legislators in order to increase understanding and improve relations. The group has organised a number of meetings and dialogues between Russian and US legislators on détente, arms control and non-proliferation. This has included formal events and informal meetings on the side of other events, such as OSCE Parliamentary Assemblies and academic conferences. Specific topics discussed have included the Iranian nuclear programme, denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula, extension of the New START Treaty (New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), preservation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) and support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.



Our positions diverge on many topics, but we still unite if the understanding of the need for an inter-parliamentary dialogue.

Inga Yumasheva, Coordinator, Russian parliamentary group for relations with the US Congress

US HALT Act 2020

On June 18, 2020, US Senator Ed Markey, member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and member of the US House of Representatives James McGovern, House Rules Committee Chairman, introduced the bicameral [Hastening Arms Limitation Talks \(HALT\) Act 2020 \(S.4045\)](#). The Act aims to freeze the global development and deployment of nuclear weapons, and uphold the Cold War-ending creed that ‘a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought’. In particular, the Act supports a renewal of the START agreement between Russia and the US, ratification by the US of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, conclusion of a fissile material control treaty, and negotiations with other nuclear-armed States to achieve universal no-first-use policies, and a verifiable freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of all nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles. The act also calls on the US government to initiate a series of *Summits on Nuclear Disarmament* similar to the very successful [Nuclear Security Summits](#) initiated by US President Obama in 2010 and which ran until 2016.



This is not an academic debate – our world has come perilously close to a catastrophic nuclear war before, and such an event is becoming more and more likely by the day. It’s time to hit the brakes on his dangerous escalation, honor our existing treaty obligations, and then put an end to nuclear weapons before they put an end to us.

James McGovern, Sponsor of the HALT Act 2020 in the US House of Representatives

3. NUCLEAR TESTING

The PTBT Amendment Conference – a novel approach to achieve the CTBT

In 1963, the UK, US and USSR negotiated a Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT), which prohibits atmospheric testing and which affirms an obligation of States Parties to seek ‘*to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time*’ and to ‘*continue negotiations to this end.*’ Despite a series of UN General Assembly resolutions supporting negotiations for a Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), by 1990 these negotiations had not commenced due to resistance by some of the nuclear-armed States. Parliamentarians for Global Action launched an initiative to amend the PTBT to turn it into a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Under the terms of the PTBT, the UK, US and Russia were required to host a PTBT Amendment Conference, once this was formally requested by one-third of the PTBT States Parties. The PTBT Amendment Conference, held 1991, helped shift the political ground to enable the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to commence in 1993 the successful negotiations on a CTBT.

Advancing CTBT Entry into Force, French National Assembly

The French National Assembly established a [working group on the Entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty \(CTBT\)](#) in 2019 following a [parliamentary study on the NPT](#), led by Members of Parliament Michel Fanget and Jean-Paul Lecoq. The working group considered concrete action points to be adopted by parliamentarians to advance with the treaty’s entry into force. The initiative has been recognised by the CTBTO, and the organisation has offered support through documentation, advice and legal assistance.



Indonesian parliamentary delegation at CTBTO radionuclide monitoring device. Photo: CTBTO

Parliamentary visits to the CTBTO

The CTBTO Headquarters in Vienna welcomes visits of parliamentary delegations so that parliamentarians can see first-hand the technical and operational means of the organisation to verify the ban on nuclear tests, and provide other useful data to member states on seismic and radiological events. Verification is an important issue for states that are considering ratification of the CTBT. Following a [visit to the CTBTO](#) by a parliamentary delegation from Indonesia in May 2011, the Indonesian parliament was then able to ratify the treaty in February 2012, the most recent Annex II state to ratify. In addition, developing an understanding of the added value of the CTBTO's global monitoring system for such things as [tsunami early warning](#) and [monitoring radiation dispersal from nuclear accidents](#) (such as Fukushima), helps parliamentarians from member states ensure adequate support for the CTBTO to undertake its work.

Cutting the funding for nuclear testing – the PLANET Act

In June 2020, US Senator Ed Markey announced introduction of the *Preserving Leadership Against Nuclear Explosives Testing (PLANET) Act*, to prevent the US government from restarting explosive nuclear weapons testing by prohibiting congressional funding for such a purpose. The move was in response to reports that US officials proposed a resumption of nuclear testing, and in particular considered a demonstration nuclear test, in what Markey said would be a misguided and counter-productive effort to bring Russia and China to the negotiating table for arms control talks.

”

A demonstration nuclear weapons test blast would be a massive mistake that would set back US and global security for decades to come. It would break the de facto global nuclear test moratorium, likely trigger nuclear testing by other states, and set off a new nuclear arms race in which everyone would come out a loser. Congress cannot afford to be silent and must step in by enacting Sen. Ed Markey's important initiative to put in place a legal prohibition on the use of funds to resume nuclear weapons testing. For the sake of our generation and generations to come, it is time to act to avoid a pandemic of dangerous nuclear weapons testing and proliferation.

Daryl G. Kimball, Executive Director, Arms Control Association

US Nuclear testing compensation legislation

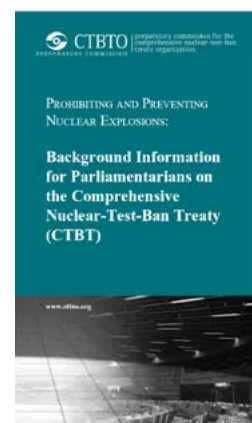
Since the 1960s, the US Congress has been active on the issue of compensation to personnel impacted by atmospheric nuclear testing. This has included the adoption of legislation on compensation relating to nuclear tests in the US such as the *Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1979*, sponsored by Senator Ted Kennedy, and legislation relating to US nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands, such as the *Nuclear Claims Tribunal Act of 1987* and the *Compact of Free Association Act* (provision 117). Although these have provided compensation for many of the people whose health has been impacted, the funding made available for the Marshall Islands has been considerably less than what was determined by the Nuclear Claims Tribunal to be required. And there are some members of Congress who believe that the compensation for US personnel affected is also inadequate. As such, there have been a number of (mostly unsuccessful) attempts in Congress to increase the compensation, including most recently the [Republic of the Marshall Islands Supplemental Nuclear Compensation Act](#) of 2011 and the [Mark Takai Atomic Veterans Healthcare Parity Act](#) of 2019.

Environmental monitoring and the Runit Island nuclear dome

In June 2019, Member of the US Congress Tulsi Gabbard [successfully included an amendment in the 2020 National Defense Authorization Act](#), which required the government to undertake a scientific review of the nuclear waste storage facility on Runit Island in the Marshall Islands. The facility, locally called The Tomb, contains over 100,000 cubic metres of radioactive nuclear waste created by US nuclear testing during the Cold War. Ms Gabbard moved for the review due to concerns that the concrete structure containing the waste is deteriorating and could be vulnerable to sea-level rise caused by climate change.



Runit Dome. Photo: US Defense Special Weapons Agency / Wikimedia



Resources:

- *Prohibiting and Preventing Nuclear Explosions: Background Information for Parliamentarians on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty*, by the CTBTO in [English](#), [Arabic](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#)
- [CTBTO legal resources](#), including a *Guide to CTBT National Implementation Measures*, *CTBT Legislation Database*, text of the *CTBT*, *Model Facility Agreement* and other documents.

4. NATIONAL PROHIBITIONS

Parliaments can adopt national legislation to comprehensively prohibit the use, threat of use, testing, development, production, transfer and possession of nuclear weapons within their territory and other areas of jurisdiction. The parliaments of Austria, Mongolia, Philippines and New Zealand have all adopted legislation along these lines. The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is expected to result in additional national legislation in some of those countries ratifying the treaty in order to fully implement the Treaty (see below).

The New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone Act

In June 1987, the New Zealand parliament adopted the [Nuclear Free Zone, Arms Control and Disarmament Act](#), which is the most comprehensive nuclear prohibition legislation adopted by a national legislature. The act prohibits manufacture, acquisition, possession or control over nuclear weapons, as well as aiding or abetting any person in these acts within the territorial space (land, sea and air) of New Zealand. It also contains an extra-territoriality clause prohibiting such acts by agents of New Zealand (government officials or civil servants) anywhere in the world. The act also established a cabinet position of Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control and a Public Advisory Committee on Disarmament and Arms Control tasked to advise the government on implementation of the act and to disperse public funds for peace and disarmament education.

5. REGIONAL PROHIBITIONS THROUGH NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONES

Over 110 countries, including virtually all of the countries in the Southern Hemisphere, are members of regional Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) treaties, which prohibit the possession of nuclear weapons by States Parties or the stationing of nuclear weapons on their territories. The NWFZ treaties also include protocols through which the nuclear-armed States commit to respecting the zones and to not threatening or using nuclear weapons against States Parties to the zones. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has [highlighted the ways in which these provisions help build regional peace and stability](#). Additional NWFZs have been proposed for the Middle East, North-East Asia the [Arctic](#) and [Europe](#).

The proposal for a Middle East zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has received strong support from NPT Review Conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2010. In 2010, the States Parties to the NPT called on the UN to host a conference on establishing such a zone, with the participation of all countries in the region, plus the three depositories of the NPT (Russia, UK and US). However, it was not possible to hold the conference, due to lack of agreement on the conference modalities by at least two of the required parties. More recently the UN General Assembly decided to hold a [Conference on establishing a Middle East WMD Free Zone](#) without requiring participation by all states in the region. The [first session](#) of the conference was held in November 2019. Parliamentarians can promote the existing zones, including their full acceptance by the nuclear-armed States, and they can support the establishment of additional zones.

Treaty of Tlatelolco receives Future Policy Award

In 1968 the adoption of the Treaty of Tlatelolco established the first Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) in an inhabited region, covering Latin America and the Caribbean. The Treaty has served as an inspiration and model for the adoption of additional NWFZs in the South Pacific, South East Asia, Africa, Central Asia and Mongolia. In 2013, the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL), which is the agency established to implement the Treaty of Tlatelolco, was awarded the [Future Policy Award's Gold Medal for Disarmament](#) to honour the invaluable contribution made by the Treaty and OPANAL to advancing peace and security in the region and globally.



Jacob von Uexkull (World Future Council), Gioconda Ubeda Rivera (OPANAL) and Alexandra Wandel (WFC) at the 2013 Future Policy Award ceremony. Photo: WFC

Nuclear weapons**Joint Parliamentary statement supporting a Middle East WMD Free zone**

In October 2011, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament released a [Joint parliamentary statement supporting a UN conference on establishing a Middle East Zone free from Nuclear Weapons and other WMD](#). The statement was endorsed by parliamentarians from countries within the region (Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Palestine) as well as from parliamentarians from the three depository countries (Russia, UK and US) and other key parliamentarians (e.g. Federica Mogherini who was Secretary of the Italian Parliament Defence Committee and later became the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy).

Bahrain IPU Parliamentary Group support for a Middle East WMD Free Zone

The Bahrain Parliamentary Group (Bahrain Delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union and Asian Parliamentary Assembly) has been active in the deliberations and adoption of IPU resolutions on peace, disarmament and international security, and in the implementation of these. In a statement prepared for this handbook in August 2020, the Parliamentary group affirmed its commitment to the achievement of a Middle East Zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (in accordance with UN General Assembly Decision 73/546 based on the resolution of the 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference), and gave support to nuclear non-proliferation agreements (NPT and CTBTO) plus political initiatives that could contribute to this goal. The statement also gave support to the UN Secretary-General's initiative for a global ceasefire.

North-East Asia NWFZ

Parliamentarians from across the political spectrum in Japan and South Korea have supported a North-East Asia NWFZ based on the 3+3 proposal (North Korea, South Korea and Japan relinquishing nuclear weapons and extended nuclear deterrence, with China, Russia and the US giving security assurances not to deploy or use nuclear weapons in region of the zone). This has included events on the proposal held in the Japanese and South Korean parliaments and a [Joint statement of Japanese and South Korean parliamentarians on Denuclearisation of Northeast Asia](#) which supports a North-East Asia NWFZ and was endorsed by 93 parliamentarians, including some who have held the positions of Foreign Minister or Defence Minister.



We recognize the importance of solidarity and cooperation between Japan and the ROK in achieving the denuclearization of Northeast Asia, in which Japan, the ROK and the DPRK commit themselves not to possessing nuclear weapons, and the neighbour countries possessing nuclear weapons commit not to using or threatening to use such weapons against Japan the ROK and the DPRK, while striving for their own nuclear disarmament. Especially, we call on the Governments of Japan and the ROK to advocate the establishment of a Northeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-free Zone in the international fora, including the NPT Review Conference and the U.N. General Assembly.

Excerpt from the *Joint statement of Japanese and Korean parliamentarians for Denuclearisation of Northeast Asia*, May 2010

Resources:

- [Pathways Forward for the ME WMD Free Zone Process and 2020 NPT Review Conference](#), Chen Zak Kane, UNIDIR, April 2020
- [Draft Treaty for a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East](#), prepared by the METO Project, 2019
- [UN Study on effective and verifiable measures which would facilitate the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East](#), 1990
- [Model treaty for a NE Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone](#), prepared by the Democratic Party of Japan Nuclear Disarmament Group
- [A NE Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone with a Three-plus-Three Arrangement](#), by Hiromichi Umebayashi, The Nautilus Institute
- [A Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone in Europe: Concept – Problems – Chances](#), Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, January 2016

6. ELIMINATION AND A NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONVENTION

A [Nuclear Weapons Convention](#) (NWC) would be a global treaty, involving nuclear-armed States and their allies, as well as non-nuclear States. It would prohibit nuclear weapons and provide an agreed programme for their phased elimination under strict and effective international verification, implementation and enforcement. The UN General Assembly has proposed negotiations on such an agreement, supported by over 130 countries, including some of states possessing nuclear weapons. A NWC has been promoted by successive Secretary-Generals of the United Nations as well as the Inter-Parliamentary Union in its resolution adopted in 2014, [Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: The Role of Parliaments](#).



PNNP presentation of resolutions on a NWC to the UNSG and the NPT Review conference 2010. Photo: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

Parliamentary resolutions supporting the NPT and a Nuclear Weapons Convention

In the run-up to the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, a number of [parliaments adopted resolutions supporting a Nuclear Weapons Convention](#), with many of them calling for action on this at the NPT Review Conference. This included the parliaments of Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, Costa Rica, Germany, Italy, Mexico and New Zealand, as well as the European Parliament. Similar resolutions were also introduced into the legislatures of France, the UK and the US, but were not adopted. These resolutions were presented to the UN Secretary-General and to the States Parties participating in the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The result was the inclusion of a specific affirmation in the NPT Review Conference final document (adopted by consensus) of the need to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world, and noting in this regard the proposal for a nuclear weapons convention.

IPU Resolution on nuclear disarmament and the role of parliaments

On March 20, 2014, at its 130th Assembly, the Inter-Parliamentary Union adopted by consensus a resolution entitled [Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: The Role of Parliaments](#). Amongst other things, the resolution calls on member parliaments to work with their governments to ‘eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and policies’, and to ‘support negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or on a package of agreements to help achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world, as outlined in the United Nations Secretary-General’s five point proposal and noted in the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan.’

Resources:

- [Model Nuclear Weapons Convention](#), United Nations Document A/62/650, 2007
- [Securing our Survival: The Case for a Nuclear Weapons Convention](#), IPPNW, IALANA, INESAP, 2007
- [Global Zero plan for the elimination of nuclear weapons](#)

7. TREATY ON THE PROHIBITION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons](#) (TPNW) is an agreement negotiated by non-nuclear States to prohibit nuclear weapons. Once it enters into force in January 2021 it will apply to all States who have ratified the treaty. Parliamentarians in non-nuclear States can encourage their governments to sign. Once the treaty is signed, parliamentarians can adopt legislation for its ratification and national implementation.

IPU/ICAN letter to parliaments

On August 6, 2020, in conjunction with the 75th anniversary of the first use of nuclear weapons, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the non-governmental organisation ICAN sent a joint letter to Speakers of Parliaments which had not signed the TPNW. This included all the nuclear-armed States and their allies and a number of non-nuclear States. The letter requested the speakers to *'raise awareness of the treaty among the members of your Parliament and to help generate a constructive debate on nuclear weapons, proliferation risks and disarmament.'*

Bangladesh draft TPNW implementation legislation

In follow-up to the ratification of the TPNW by the Bangladesh parliament, Saber Chowdhury MP drafted implementation legislation modelled on New Zealand's 1987 law prohibiting nuclear weapons and Mongolia's 2000 law establishing Mongolia as a single-state nuclear weapon-free zone. The draft legislation also includes some additional elements such as liability for nuclear weapons detonations by other countries that might impact on the sovereignty of Bangladesh and health and security of its people. The draft legislation is pending action as of October 2020.



Signing Ceremony for the Treaty on Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, 20 September 2017. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera (right), President of Costa Rica, speaks at the signing ceremony. At his side is Secretary-General António Guterres. Photo: UN Photo/ Kim Haughton

Resources:

- [Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Questions and Answers](#), UNFOLD ZERO, 2020.
- [Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapon-Free World](#), chapter on the TPNW, page 7.



Chemical and biological weapons

The use of chemical and biological weapons in wartime is prohibited under the Geneva Protocol of 1925. This is generally accepted as customary law which is universally binding. The production and possession of these weapons are prohibited by the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention and the 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention which are binding on States Parties. In addition, the UN Security Council has adopted Resolutions 1540 and 2325 which establish obligations on all states to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons to non-State actors. Parliamentarians have a responsibility to ensure implementation of these obligations by their governments.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the devastating impact that novel viruses can have on human health and economies, regardless of whether the virus emerges from military, civilian or zoonotic sources (Note: zoonotic source is where the pathogen has jumped from a non-human animal to a human). A strengthening of the BWC could assist in preventing and/or managing future pandemics (See [Info box 7: Pandemics and the Biological Weapons Convention](#), page 75).

Relevant international agreements:

- Geneva Protocol of 1925 banning the use of chemical and biological weapons in war
- Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), 1972 (also known as the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention – BTWC)
- Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), 1992
- UN Security Council Resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2325 (2016)

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Encourage universal ratification of the Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention;
- Consider and approve comprehensive national implementation legislation for the BWC and CWC (if not already adopted), and undertake parliamentary oversight and reviews of national implementation;
- Make use of existing model legislation and/or expertise to review the adequacy or otherwise of already enacted legislation and modify, as necessary;
- Seek regular briefings/consultations from relevant government ministries on steps being taken to implement and enforce UNSCR 1540, including advice from the ministries on how parliamentarians can further facilitate implementation and enforcement;
- Review and contribute to their governments' National Reports on UNSCR 1540 Implementation, and avail of the expertise offered by the UNSCR 1540 Committee in this regard.

Examples of good parliamentary practice:**Nepal, Samoa, Central African Republic and Tanzania: Ratification of the BWC**

As of September 2020, 183 States have ratified/acceded to the BWC. Between 2015 and 2019, PGA Members Hon. Ramesh Lekhak and former Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Prakash Sharan Mahat of Nepal, Hon. Taefu Lemi Taefu, Associate Minister for Natural Resources and Environment of Samoa, Hon. Béatrice Epaye of the Central African Republic and Hon. Jasson Rweikiza of Tanzania, respectively, played decisive roles in mobilization of governmental support leading to ratification of/accession to the BWC by their respective States.

UK Chemical Weapons Act 1996 and destruction of stockpiles

The United Kingdom Parliament adopted the Chemical Weapons Act 1996 to ratify and implement the Chemical Weapons Convention. Under the provisions of the Act, the UK completed the destruction of its stockpiles of chemical weapons in 2007. The Act also establishes a [Chemical Weapons Convention UK National Authority](#) to monitor industry and government to ensure adherence to the CWC.

European Parliament Resolution on the BTWC, 2006

On November 16, 2006, the European Parliament adopted a [resolution on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention](#) (BTWC) in preparation for the 6th Review Conference of the Treaty. The parliament called, among other things, for ‘*accession of all States to the BTWC, a declaration that the ban on biological and toxin weapons is a universally binding rule of international law, strengthening of national implementation measures including penal legislation and control over pathogenic micro-organisms and toxins in the framework of the BTWC,*’ and ‘*strengthening of the treaty including improvement of the mechanisms for verifying compliance by the States Parties.*’

Campaign for the Biological Weapons Convention & UN Security Council Resolution 1540

In December 2015, Parliamentarians for Global Action launched a global [Campaign for Universality and Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention \(BWC\) & Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 \(2004\)](#). The campaign has played an important role in supporting parliamentarians in the adoption of legislative measures to ratify the BWC, as well as implement the BWC and UNSCR 1540. Since its inception, PGA members have contributed to the ratification of/accession to the BWC in Angola, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Nepal, Samoa, the Central African Republic, Niue and Tanzania. PGA Members in Guinea Bissau, the Central African Republic and Solomon Islands conducted significant outreach paving the way for submission of First National Reports to the UNSCR 1540 Committee in 2018 and 2019.



IPU and UNODA Pacific Region parliamentary seminar on implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540. Left to right: Anne Tolley MP, Deputy Speaker of the New Zealand Parliament; Saber Chowdhury MP, Honorary President of the IPU and David Carter MP, Member of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament. Photo: IPU

India Chemical Weapons Act 2000: regional confidence building

The Indian Parliament adopted the [Chemical Weapons Act 2000](#) to implement the Chemical Weapons Convention. The adoption of the Chemical Weapons Act established a [National Authority on the Chemical Weapons Convention](#) and served as a confidence-building measure that helped to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan. Prior to the adoption of the Act, both countries had fledgling chemical weapons programmes. It is suspected that Pakistan used chemical weapons against Indian soldiers in Siachen in 1987, and that India maintained stockpiles of chemical weapons even after ratifying the treaty in 1996. The Chemical Weapons Act was amended in 2010 to add further restrictions on chemical weapons.

Chile: Parliamentary action on biological and chemical weapons

On July 2, 2020, the Chamber of Deputies of Chile unanimously approved a [bill to implement the Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention](#) into domestic Law. The Bill has subsequently been enacted and will enter into force in February 2021. The bill received substantial support from Hon. Tucapel Jimenez MP, Executive Member of Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA). Hon. Jimenez organised a number of preparatory activities, including a [Regional Latin America Workshop to Promote Universality and Implementation of the BWC and UNSCR 1540 \(2004\)](#) in Santiago de Chile in May 2017, supported by Global Affairs Canada. Together with a number of colleagues in Parliament, he formally requested the transmission of the Bill to the Chamber of Deputies in 2018 as well as participated substantively in deliberations on possible amendments to the Bill.



Tucapel Jimenez MP, Regional Latin America parliamentary workshop to promote the Biological Weapons Convention and UN Security Council Resolution 1540, Santiago, Chile, May 2017.
Photo: PGA

Resources:

- [Resolution 1540 fact sheet](#), produced by the UN 1540 Committee
- [A guide to the Chemical Weapons Convention for Parliamentarians](#), produced by the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)
- [Model CWC Implementing Legislation](#), produced by the OPCW
- [Compendium of national implementation](#) (legislation and other measures), produced by the OPCW
- [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, also available in [Arabic](#)
- [Sample Legislation, Regulatory Guidelines and other tools for implementation of the BWC](#), VERTIC
- 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 108th Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference, Santiago de Chile, April 6-11, 2003
- [Effective implementation of Resolution 1540 in Africa: opportunities for parliaments](#), published IPU 2016, available online in English and French
- [Engaging parliaments of the Pacific region in the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540](#), published by IPU 2020, available online in English and French





Outer Space

International law holds that outer space and celestial bodies are not subject to national appropriation (no-one can own them), and that exploration and use of outer space should be carried out for the benefit of all to advance international peace and security and promote international cooperation and understanding. However, space is already being used for military operations, in particular surveillance and communications. In addition, a number of countries are researching, developing and testing systems for anti-satellite warfare and other applications of force into or from space.

The Outer Space Treaty and the Moon Treaty prohibit the placement of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction in space and prohibits the establishment of military installations or the conducting of military exercises on the moon. However, the treaties do not prohibit the placement of conventional weapons systems – or systems which contribute to warfare (such as military command and communications systems) in space. Nor does international law prohibit the targeting of satellites from earth or from space (anti-satellite warfare).

Russia and China have proposed a *Treaty on Prevention of the Placement of Weapons in Outer Space and of the Threat or Use of Force against Outer Space Objects*, but this does not yet receive support from all space active countries (most notably the US). In addition, the European Union has proposed an *International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities* which is not as ambitious as the Russia/China proposal, but which does include provisions to prevent the threat or use of force in outer space.

Relevant international agreements:

- Moon Treaty: Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, 1979
- Outer Space Treaty: Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, 1967
- UN General Assembly Declaration of Legal Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, 1963

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Adopt space launch regulations (in countries that host space launch facilities) to prohibit the launch of payloads that would contribute to the weaponisation of outer space or the threat or use of force in outer space, including attacks on satellites, or the command and control of nuclear weapons systems;
- Promote an optional protocol to the Outer Space Treaty to prohibit the placement of any weapons in space;
- Promote UN negotiations on an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities;
- Support a ban on the development and testing of anti-satellite weapons.

Examples of good parliamentary practice:

European Parliament, Space and Security Resolution 2008

On July 10, 2008, the European Parliament passed a [resolution on Space and Security](#) which calls ‘on all international actors to refrain from using offensive equipment in space’, expresses ‘particular concern about the use of destructive force against satellites (...) and the consequences of the massive increase in debris for space security’ and recommends ‘the adoption of legally binding international instruments focusing on banning the use of weapons against space assets and the stationing of weapons in space.’

New Zealand Outer Space & High-altitude Activities Act 2017. Space launch guidelines 2019

The New Zealand [Outer Space and High-altitude Activities Act 2017](#) and [2019 Space launch guidelines](#) govern space launches and payloads under the jurisdiction of New Zealand. Their application is currently of most relevance to the Rocketlab space launch facility located in the Mahia Peninsula of the North Island of New Zealand. The Act, adopted by the New Zealand Parliament, codifies into domestic law obligations under the Outer Space Treaty to ensure that space launches under the jurisdiction of New Zealand do not contribute to:

- placing in orbit around the Earth any objects carrying nuclear weapons or weapons of mass destruction, installing such weapons on celestial bodies, or stationing such weapons in outer space in any other manner;
- establishing military bases, installations, or fortifications on celestial bodies;
- testing any type of weapons or conducting military manoeuvres on celestial bodies.

The 2019 Space launch guidelines, adopted by the New Zealand Government, extend these obligations to prohibit space launches under the jurisdiction of New Zealand that would involve payloads:

- that contribute in any way to nuclear weapons programmes or capabilities,
- with the intended end use of harming, interfering with, or destroying other spacecraft, or systems on Earth,
- with the intended end use of supporting or enabling specific defence, security or intelligence operations that are contrary to government policy,
- where the intended end use is likely to cause serious or irreversible harm to the environment.

The regulations do not prohibit all military payloads, space launch contracts or military applications of space launches. However, they provide probably the most comprehensive regulations in the world for ensuring space launches do not contribute to anti-satellite warfare or space-based weapons systems, and that they conform to principles of international law governing military, security and intelligence systems.

A criticism of the regulations is that they do not provide a role for public scrutiny of the government’s decisions with regard to the granting of launch permits. Such a role is provided in the 1987 New Zealand Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Act with regard to the government’s decisions whether or not to allow port visits of vessels (ships and aircraft) with capacity to carry nuclear weapons. There are also some critics who would oppose any foreign defence contracts for New Zealand space launches due to the difficulty of verifying their compliance with the regulations.

US Space Preservation Act of 2001

In October 2001, Member of the US House of Representatives Dennis Kucinich introduced the [Space Preservation Act of 2001](#) which aimed to ‘*preserve the cooperative, peaceful uses of space for the benefit of all humankind by permanently prohibiting the basing of weapons in space by the United States, and to require the President to take action to adopt and implement a world treaty banning space-based weapons.*’ The act did not receive sufficient support to be adopted, but remains useful as a model of legislative action to prevent an arms race in outer space.

US Senate draft resolution on peaceful uses of space, 2019

In October 2019, US Senators Tom Udall and Tim Kaine, both members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced [S-Res 386, Supporting international cooperation and continued United States leadership to maintain access to space and achieve advances in space technology](#). The draft resolution aims to maintain US leadership in protecting satellites and spacecraft in Earth’s orbit from space debris and ensuring that all nations cooperate to promote the peaceful use of space for research and commercial purposes. The draft resolution highlights the facts that ‘*destructive anti-satellite tests threaten international access to space;*’ and that ‘*a collision or other preventable disaster in space would reduce access to space and threaten future military, civil, and commercial missions in space for all countries,*’ and aims to prevent these through US leadership in the guidelines and rules developed in the [United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space](#).

Resources:

- [United Nations Treaties and Principles On Outer Space, related General Assembly resolutions and other documents](#), UN Office for Outer Space Affairs
- [Fact sheet: Draft International Code of Conduct for Outer Space activities](#), Secure World Foundation
- [Space Dossier File 6: Ballistic Missile Defence and Outer Space Security: A Strategic Interdependence](#), by Paul Meyer. Published UNIDIR, June 2020



CHAPTER 2: **DISARMAMENT THAT SAVES LIVES**

This section focuses on parliamentary action to regulate conventional arms 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.



Conventional weapons and the arms trade

The UN Charter (Article 26) establishes an obligation on the Security Council to establish a system for the regulation of armaments ‘in order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources.’ In addition, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty establishes an obligation on states to achieve general and complete disarmament, an obligation reinforced by a number of UN General Assembly resolutions. In practice, the implementation of these obligations has been left up to individual states, regions and the UN General Assembly. A step in the right direction was made with the negotiation of the *Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe* (CFE) in 1990, but this has since collapsed. The UN General Assembly has undertaken some measures through the establishment of a [UN Register of Conventional Arms](#) (UNROCA) and the negotiation and adoption of the [Arms Trade Treaty](#) (ATT) in 2013. The UNROCA includes reported information on arms imports and exports. The Arms Trade Treaty establishes obligations on States Parties to prevent arms transfers which would: violate UN Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, break international treaties or arms embargoes, or that are likely to be used in crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide, grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Convention, or attacks against civilians.

Relevant international agreements and law:

- UN Charter Article 26, 1945
- Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Article VI), 1968
- UN Register of Conventional Arms
- Arms Trade Treaty, 2013

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Call on their government to submit full reports of their conventional arms holdings and arms transfers to the UN Register of Conventional Arms;
- Work for the signature and ratification by their country of the Arms Trade Treaty, if their country is not already a party to the Treaty;
- Adopt regulations to ensure that all arms transfers are consistent with the Arms Trade Treaty, and monitor the implementation of these regulations;
- Propose reductions in national weapons production and acquisition, with greater emphasis being placed on diplomacy and international law to achieve national security;
- Apply a moratorium on production, trade and supply of weapons during the COVID-19 pandemic (see chapter 6 below).

Examples of good parliamentary practice:

Global Parliamentary Declaration on the Arms Trade Treaty

Over 2,000 parliamentarians from 113 countries signed a [Global Parliamentary Declaration on the Arms Trade Treaty](#) which supported the 2012-2013 negotiations for the Arms Trade Treaty, and which was received by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in an official ceremony at the United Nations. The high level of support for the Declaration helped to galvanise broader government awareness and political will contributing to the subsequent adoption of the ATT in 2013, in addition to mobilising wider public opinion in favour of adoption of this treaty. The Declaration was launched by Control Arms and Parliamentarians for Global Action. PGA Members worldwide played a substantial role in spear-heading endorsement by a large majority of the parliamentarians who signed the Declaration.

Costa Rica, abolition of armed forces

In 1949, the Parliament of Costa Rica adopted a constitutional amendment (Article 12) abolishing the standing armed forces and ending the military as a permanent institution. Since then, Costa Rica has relied on diplomacy and international law to achieve national security and to resolve disputes between themselves and their neighbours. This new security framework also gave rise to a new foreign policy for advancing regional and international peace and disarmament, including taking lead roles in the negotiations of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Guinea Bissau and Maldives: Ratification of the ATT

As of October 2020, 110 states had ratified the Arms Trade Treaty. In most of these states, parliamentary action was required for ratification. In some cases, leadership from individual parliamentarians was instrumental. PGA Member Parliamentarians have made meaningful contributions leading to ratification of the ATT in 51 States worldwide to date. The ratification of the ATT by Guinea Bissau in 2018 and Maldives in 2019 are just two such examples.

Hon. Dr. Suzy Barbosa, a Guinea Bissau MP and former Executive Committee Member of Parliamentarians for Global Action, undertook a number of activities to inform and engage the parliament on the issue over two years culminating in ratification of the ATT by the National Assembly of Guinea Bissau in July 2018. Dr. Barbosa, who in 2019 became the Foreign Minister, followed up the ratification of ATT with a parliamentary process including workshops to develop a national plan of action, which was adopted in October 2018.



In Maldives, former PGA Member Hon. Ahmed Mahloof, having supported accession to the ATT through a concerted outreach campaign, including in the media since 2015, and on becoming a Government Minister in 2019, successfully persuaded the Government of Maldives to accede to the ATT in 2019.

” I am delighted to have been able to make progress, along with my fellow colleagues from parliament, members of the PGA National Group in Guinea-Bissau. As a Guinean citizen, I am pleased to see this development take place at a such important time in Guinea-Bissau. It brings hope to our future, and sends a positive message to the international community.

Hon. Dr. Suzi Barbosa, MP, PGA Executive Committee Member. Photo: PGA

Leahy Laws, US

The United States is not a party to the Arms Trade Treaty* and so is not bound by its provisions. However, there are some congressional measures which restrict US military and financial support to foreign military and security forces that are implicated in the commission of a gross violation of human rights (GVHR). The most substantial of these are the [Leahy Laws](#) named after Senator Patrick Leahy.

These are two statutory provisions that apply directly to the State Department and the Department of Defense. Both departments are serious about this law, as evidenced in their detailed implementation provisions. However, the law is applicable primarily to government operations, and not to private arms sales.

**The US signed the Arms Trade Treaty in 2013 during the administration of President Obama, but the subsequent administration 'unsigned' the treaty in 2019 by stating in a letter to the UN Secretary-General that the US had no intention of becoming a party to the Treaty.*

US Congress actions on arms sales and human rights violations

Irrespective of the position of the US Administration on the Arms Trade Treaty, the US Congress has taken action on a number of occasions to block arms sales that have a high probability of contributing to serious violations of human rights and/or international humanitarian law. In 2016, Congress adopted resolutions blocking specific arms sales to Saudi Arabia in light of the bombing of hospitals and civilian areas in their war against Yemen. These actions had some success in moving the Obama administration to cancel some of the weapons deals. In 2019, similar actions by Congress were vetoed by the Trump Administration.

UK parliamentary inquiry into arms exports, implementing the Arms Trade Treaty, 2018

The UK ratified the Arms Trade Treaty in 2014. Since then, the parliament has played an important role in implementation of the treaty. One example of this is the [2018 Report of the UK Parliament's Committees on Arms Export Control](#), which followed a review of UK arms exports and imports with particular attention given to the country's responsibilities under the Arms Trade Treaty. The report [concluded](#), amongst other things, that: *'in respect of open licences for exports to countries that have not signed the Arms Trade Treaty or are on the Foreign Office's list of Human Rights Priority Countries' the government should consider a 'presumption of denial' or at least ensure that there be 'a more stringent process in place for any arms exports to such countries, so the Government will be able to show, if such arms exports are approved, that they would not be in breach of the Criteria.'*

Resources:

- [Parliamentary Handbook Promoting Signature Ratification and Implementation of the ATT](#), PGA 2013. Available in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#), [Russian](#) and [Chinese](#).
- [PGA Parliamentary Toolkit on the Arms Trade Treaty](#), PGA, 2013. Available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#).
- [Arms Trade Treaty Model Law for the Pacific Region](#), produced by the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- [National Implementation of the Proposed Arms Trade Treaty A Practical Guide](#), Oxfam 2010. (This was published prior to the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty but is still applicable.)
- [ATT Monitor](#), tracking the Arms Trade Treaty compliance and implementation.
- [Implementing the Arms Trade Treaty and the UN Small Arms Programme of Action: A Guide to Coordinating an Effective Arms Control System](#), by Laura Spano and Philip Alpers, Centre for Armed Violence Reduction, 2017



Small arms and light weapons

Relevant international and regional agreements:

International:

- 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
- Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol), 2001

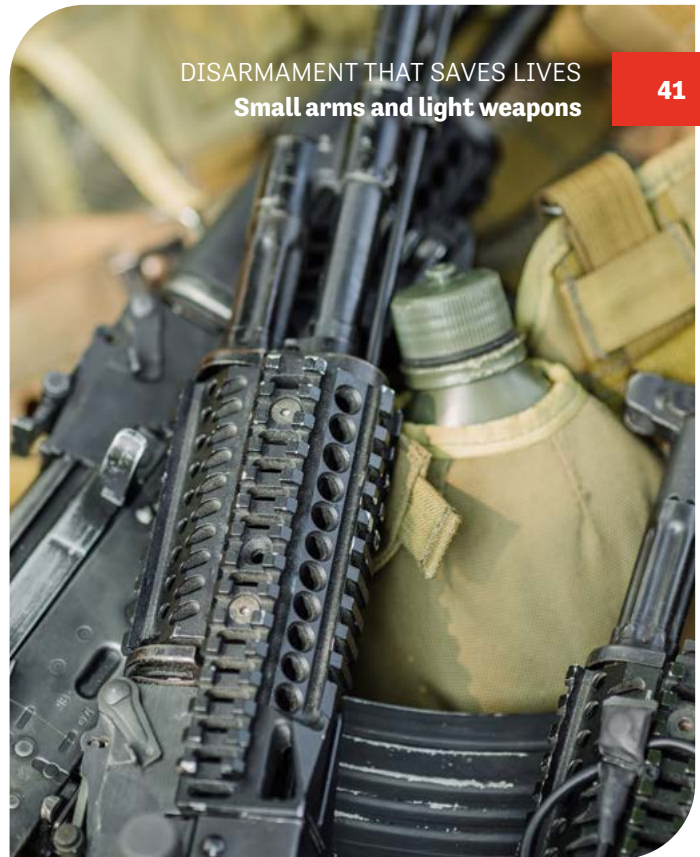
Regional:

- 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
- 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
- Inter-American Convention on Firearms, 1997

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Review and propose amendments to current SALW related legislation;
- Call on their government to submit full reports to the UN PoA and ATT, emphasising the importance of transparency as a tool of building trust amongst countries;
- Exercise the oversight function vis-à-vis the government, focusing on the implementation of relevant conventional arms control instruments;
- Consult relevant authorities on the implementation of national SALW policies, in particular follow up with national SALW commissions, where existent;
- Actively promote and participate in awareness-raising campaigns on the issue of SALW proliferation and misuse, putting an emphasis on reaching out to constituents from areas affected by SALW by promoting a comprehensive approach that safeguards public health;
- Support and engage in regional and international parliamentary efforts to exchange, analyse and formulate cross-regional SALW policies;
- Engage in dialogue with CSOs on possible policies to prevent and address SALW proliferation and misuse, including innovative awareness-raising initiatives and voluntary surrender programmes;
- Promote inclusion of parliamentarians in the international negotiations/conferences related to international SALW control instruments, in order to facilitate the bridging of knowledge and incorporation of international instruments from the international to the regional and national realm.



Examples of good parliamentary practice:

Argentina: National Programme for the Voluntary Surrender of Firearms, 2006

Following an incident in which a 15-year-old school boy opened fire at school near Buenos Aires, killing three classmates and injuring five, the Argentine Disarmament Network (RAD) was formed in 2004 in order to create a network for multiple civil society organisations working on armed violence. On December 20, 2006, Argentina's Parliament adopted [Ley 26.216](#), which establishes the National Programme for the Voluntary Surrender of Firearms. The Programme established a voluntary and anonymous gun and ammunition buyback. From 2007 to 2015, [more than 300,000 guns and 1.3 million munitions were destroyed through the programme](#). These were paid by a special cheque created in collaboration with the Argentine National Bank to guarantee anonymity and build trust. As part of the Programme, a public awareness campaign on the risks of owning firearms and an 0-800 number for the answering of questions was also created. An innovative aspect of the Programme is that it classifies gun violence as a critical public health problem.

Brazil: Statute of Disarmament, Law No. 10,826/03, 2003

Brazil has a long history of gun violence. Today, it is among the countries with the most homicides in the world, registering almost 64,000 in 2018. Nearly three-quarters of homicides involve guns. In 2003, Brazil's Congress passed the [Statute of Disarmament](#), which introduced comprehensive reform of gun control legislation. A year later, then-President da Silva signed an additional decree on the Statute in 2004. The Statute established rules on gun ownership and carry permits, as well as creating a national firearms registry. As part of this overhaul, the first phase of a voluntary gun 'buy-back' scheme and amnesty ran from the July to December 2004 before being extended. The campaign resulted from a civil society initiative and was conducted in coordination with the Ministry of Justice and The National Arms Registry. In the first phase, ending October 2005, [495,855 small arms had been collected across Brazil as part of the campaign](#). [One report](#) mentions how this was the first time in 13 years that Brazil had seen a fall in the number of deaths caused by firearms – a drop in 8% from 2003.

In 2015, a measure to replace the 2003 statute and weaken gun control was stopped in Congress, but in 2019, the newly-elected President Bolsonaro signed a [decree](#) that loosened gun control in the country.

PARLATINO cooperation and Model Law 2008

On April 6-7, 2006, the Committee of Citizen Security, Combat and Prevention of Drug Trafficking, Terrorism and Organized Crime of the Latin American and Caribbean Parliament (Parlatino) decided to elaborate a *Model Law on firearms and ammunition control* in collaboration with the Brazilian Foundation Viva Rio, a member of the Latin American Coalition for the Prevention of Armed Violence (CLAVE), the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Swedish Fellowship of Reconciliation. The Model law is available in [English](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#). The aim was to provide Latin American parliaments with the groundwork for developing new laws to combat illicit arms trafficking and misuse of these deadly goods, with the main objective of making Latin America a more peaceful and secure region for its people.

This Model Law is the result of an intensive and participatory process hosted by Parlatino, which created a space for debate and exchange of views among parliamentarians committed to these issues, as well as civil society organisations and experts in the field. The Model Law has been used as a reference in legislative work in eight countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Panama, Paraguay and Uruguay.

West Africa: ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other related Materials, 2006

In October 1998, members of ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) adopted the world's first regional Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons after concern for regional security. A regional approach was deemed the most appropriate method in the context as the proliferation of SALW poses a threat to peace and security in the region and facilitates cross-border crime. Most countries in the region do not manufacture weapons but import them.

Nonetheless, this moratorium was not legally binding and following discussions between Heads of State and governments, civil society and the EU, amongst others, the [ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other Related Materials](#) was adopted on June 14, 2006. Upon the ninth signature, the Convention entered into force and became a legally binding instrument in September 2009.

An important aspect of the Convention's framework is the implementation and enforcement of policies and legislation against the proliferation of SALW and their ammunition at the national level as well as the harmonisation of legislation to fight against illicit transfers at the sub-regional and regional levels. Parliamentarians have a crucial role to play in this effort. The ECOWAS Parliament, a forum for dialogue, consultation and consensus among legislators from the ECOWAS region, has also been used to advance the goals of the Convention, including through workshops, debates and sharing best practises.

Australia: National Firearms Agreement and associated legislation, 1996

The [National Firearms Agreement](#) (NFA) was adopted in 1996 in response to the *Port Arthur massacre* that killed 35 people. The [laws to give effect to the Agreement](#) were passed by Australian State governments within 12 days of the massacre. The NFA places tight control on semi-automatic and fully automatic weapons, although permitted their use by licensed individuals who required them for a purpose other than 'personal protection'. The act included a gun buy-back provision which resulted in more than 700,000 weapons being surrendered.

In the 18 years prior to the adoption of the agreement and implementing law, there had been 13 public mass shootings in Australia (using the definition of five or more people killed). In the 24 years since its adoption there have been none (although there was a family suicide/murder that involved the deaths of seven family members in 2018).



Legislators in a Pan-African Parliamentary event organised by the Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons to develop a Parliamentary Action Plan to implement the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms in Africa. From left to right: Hon. Olipa Chiluba MP (Malawi), Hon. Senator Lilian Timveos (Zimbabwe), Hon. Phesheya Victor Hlatshwayo MP (Eswatini/Swaziland), Chairperson of the Committee on Cooperation, International Relations and Conflict Resolution from the Pan-African Parliament, and Hon. Ernesto Mulato MP (Angola). March 2018. Photo: PFSALW.

Burkina Faso: Addressing armed violence and illicit arms trafficking

Burkina Faso is amongst a number of African countries that has experienced moderately high rates of gun deaths (5 per 100,000 per year) and illicit arms trafficking. In 2010, a parliamentary network on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RPB/SALW) was established under the auspices of the Burkina Faso parliament. The initiative was proposed by former member of parliament Hon. Drissa Sanogo, who served as the first president of the network. The RPB/SALW was active in the negotiations in New York and Geneva on the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by Burkina Faso in 2014, as well as in its implementation. This has included the creation of two government authorities for the control of small arms and light weapons, the National Commission for the Fight against the Proliferation of Small Arms (CN /PAL) and the High Authority for the Control of Imports of Arms and their Use (HACIAU). This has also included further ATT implementation regulations in 2019 (law no. 014-2019 /AN) and organisation of several training and awareness-raising workshops for officials, gunsmiths, traditional hunters (called Dozos) and public education professionals.



The Network of Burkina Faso parliamentarians on small arms and light weapons has enabled parliamentarians to participate in the Arms Trade Treaty and other international agreements, and ensured that these agreements are adopted and implemented in Burkina Faso. One result has been the considerable reduction in illicit trafficking of arms in Burkina Faso from 2010 to 2016. Unfortunately, since 2016, extremist expansion, violence and terrorism has led to over 1600 deaths, one million displaced people and has reversed many of the gains made by the adoption of the ATT.

Hon. Drissa SANOGO, Former Member of Parliament. Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Pan-African Network for Peace, Security and Development

Resources:

- [Global Parliamentary Action Plan- Connecting the Dots](#), PFSALW 2018
- [Parliamentary Action Plan, Latin America and the Caribbean](#), PFSALW, 2019
- [Parliamentary Action Plan, Africa](#), PFSALW, 2019
- [Parliamentary Action Plan, Middle East and North Africa MENA](#), PFSALW, 2019 (in English). Also available in [Arabic](#).
- [Regional Caribbean Port of Spain Plan of Action on Addressing the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons](#), PGA 2019
- [Kuala Lumpur Plan of Action – Regional South and South East Asia Parliamentary Workshop Promoting Engagement of Women Parliamentarians in Addressing the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons](#), PGA 2020
- [Parliamentary Handbook on Promoting Signature, Ratification and Implementation of the ATT](#), PGA and Control Arms.
- [Parliamentary Tool Kit on the Arms Trade Treaty](#), PGA
- [Small Arms and Children – Parliamentary handbook](#), PFSALW
- [Small Arms and Violence against Women – Parliamentary handbook](#), PFSALW
- 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 122nd IPU Assembly, Bangkok, April 2010
- IPU Resolution: [The role of parliaments in strengthening the control of trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition](#), adopted by the 114th IPU Assembly: Nairobi, May 2006
- [From Policy Inertia to World Leader: Australia's 'Perfect Storm' of Gun Control](#), by Philip Alpers and Zareh Ghazarian, 2019.
- [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





Inhumane weapons and warfare: cluster munitions, landmines and explosive weapons in populated areas

The *Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907* codified international humanitarian law applicable in wartime, including protection of civilians and prisoners of war and prohibition of weapons systems that were inhumane. At that time, this included poisonous gases and expanding bullets. In 1980, the *Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects* (CCW) was adopted. It affirmed ‘the principle of international law that the right of the parties to an armed conflict to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited, and on the principle that prohibits the employment in armed conflicts of weapons, projectiles and material and methods of warfare of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering.’

Subsequent protocols to the CCW have provided restrictions or comprehensive prohibitions on specific weapons systems, the use of which would cause superfluous injury or cause unnecessary suffering. In some case, e.g. landmines and cluster munitions, comprehensive prohibitions were not possible to achieve through the CCW due to opposition by a few stand-out States Parties, and so like-minded groups of countries negotiated separate, stand-alone treaties.

Relevant international agreements:

- Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907
- Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (Inhumane Weapons Convention) 1980, and the additional protocols:
 - Protocol I on Non-Detectable Fragments
 - Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby Traps and Other Devices
 - Protocol III on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Incendiary Weapons
 - Protocol IV on Blinding Laser Weapons
 - Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War
- Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Mine Ban Treaty), 1997
- Convention on Cluster Munitions, 2008

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians and parliaments can:

- Ensure the ratification of the landmines and cluster munitions conventions by their parliament/government;
- Ensure that implementation measures for the landmines and cluster munitions conventions include prohibition of investments in the cluster munitions and landmines industries;
- Support the adoption of an international commitment (declaration or agreement) on preventing the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas.

Examples of good parliamentary practice:**1. CLUSTER MUNITIONS****France – Law on the Elimination of Cluster Munitions, 2010**

France is a former user, producer, and exporter of cluster munitions. However, France joined the negotiations for the Cluster Munitions Convention, signed the treaty in 2008 and ratified it in 2009. It enacted national implementation legislation, the [Law on the Elimination of Cluster Munitions](#), on July 20, 2010. The law has facilitated the successful destruction of France's stockpile of 34,876 cluster munitions and 14.9 million submunitions. This was achieved on June 30, 2016, more than two years in advance of its deadline.

Netherlands regulations on divestment from the cluster munitions industry

Following the adoption of the Cluster Munitions Convention in 2008, a number of countries ratifying the convention adopted regulations prohibiting investments in the cluster munitions industry as part of legislation or policy to implement the treaty. The initial legislation adopted by Netherlands in 2011 to implement the treaty did not include a prohibition on cluster munitions investments. However, such a prohibition was adopted as part of the *Market Abuse (Financial Supervision Act) Decree Amendment, 2013*. The Netherlands policy includes financial penalties on institutions that violate the law, and vests authority for monitoring and enforcement of the policy with the Netherlands Authority for Financial Markets (AFM). The AFM provides a regularly updated list of cluster munitions producers.



B-1B Lancer unleashes cluster munitions.
Photo: U.S. Air Force / Wikimedia

Belgium – Laws banning inhumane weapons and related investments

Through the [Law on Anti-personnel Mines](#), 1995 and the [Law Regulating Economic and Individual Activities with Weapons](#), 2006, Belgium became the first country in the world to, respectively, adopt national legislation banning landmines and cluster munitions. Belgium's unprecedented legislative initiatives preceded the international treaties banning landmines and cluster munitions (Mine Ban Treaty and Cluster Munitions Convention), and inspired, strengthened and shaped the international approach. In addition, Belgium was the first country in the world to prohibit investments in producers of cluster munitions, when in 2007 its parliament unanimously adopted the 'Mahoux Law' (named after the law's sponsor Senator Philippe Mahoux). The law expanded an existing regulation banning investments in landmine manufacturers. The Belgian parliament also adopted legislation in 2007 banning weapons using depleted uranium, and followed up on this two years later by adopting a law, also sponsored by Senator Mahoux, prohibiting investments in depleted uranium weapons.

European Parliament, 2007

In October 2007, the European Parliament indicated its support for banning cluster munitions and investments in the cluster munitions industry, by adopting a resolution entitled [International Treaty to ban cluster munitions](#), in which the Parliament called for a moratorium on using, investing in, stockpiling, producing, transferring, or exporting cluster munitions, and supports negotiations for a Cluster Munitions Treaty. The EP resolution cited the 'Mahoux Law' as inspiration and precedent.

US Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act, 2017

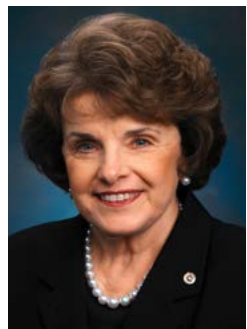
The Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act, 2017, introduced by Senators Diane Feinstein and Patrick Leahy, continues a series of US congressional actions since the Cluster Munitions Convention was concluded in 2008. The United States has not signed the Convention. However, previous congressional action in support has been effective in influencing US policy, including the adoption of a policy in 2008 to phase out the production and use of cluster munitions that result in more than a 1% UXO (Unexploded Ordnance) rate by 2018.

In 2017, the Trump administration abandoned this policy, allowing for more liberal use of cluster munitions by US Defence forces. The Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act 2017 supports the previous restrictions on cluster munitions, as well as additional restrictions on production and sales of cluster munitions and against any use of cluster munitions in civilian areas. If adopted, it would prohibit congressional funding for such activities. The Act also calls on the US to sign and ratify the Cluster Munitions Convention. To date, the act has not received sufficient support for its adoption.

”

These indiscriminate weapons have left a legacy of unexploded munitions in war-torn areas. While the United States has not widely used cluster munitions since the 2003 invasion of Iraq, U.S.-made cluster bombs have recently been used in Yemen, endangering civilians. The United States should join the more than 100 nations that have agreed to never again use or export these weapons by signing the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This legislation would encourage the administration to do exactly that.

Senator Diane Feinstein. Photo: US Senate Photo/Becky Hammel



2. LANDMINES

Bosnia and Herzegovina Demining Law 2002 (amended 2017)

Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Mine Ban Treaty in 1998 and adopted the Demining Law in 2002 to implement the treaty. Landmines had been used in the territory during the Bosnian war of 1992-1995, resulting in over 3000 casualties. At the end of the war hundreds of thousands of unexploded mines remained. The 2002 law established a [Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre](#) to coordinate demining and victim assistance, and a Demining Commission to oversee and review implementation.

Since its establishment, the authorities have facilitated the discovery and safe destruction of over 45,000 anti-personnel mines, over 7,000 anti-tank mines and approximately 40,000 explosive remnants of war. Parliament continues to play an oversight role in reviewing the implementation of the law and approving the [National Mine Action Strategy](#). For more information see [Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor Country Reports: Bosnia and Herzegovina](#).

Ireland Cluster Munitions And Anti-Personnel Mines Act (2008)

Ireland ratified the Mine Ban Treaty in 1999 and adopted implementing legislation the same year. The legislation was updated in 2008 to also enact Ireland's obligations under the Cluster Munitions Convention. [The legislation](#) was amended again in 2020 to add additional provisions, most notably a prohibition of investments in the landmines and cluster munitions industries.

Joint US Congressional letter on Landmines, May 2020

The United States has not joined the Mine Ban Treaty. However, in 2014 the Obama Administration [announced a new policy](#) that would limit production and deployment of landmines to US military operations in the Korean peninsula, i.e. to defend the Republic of Korea (ROK) against an attack from the Democratic Peoples' Republic of Korea. The Administration also gave a commitment to explore alternative means to ensure the security of the ROK in order to be able to accede to the Mine Ban Treaty. In January 2020, the Trump administration reversed this policy with a [new policy directive](#) allowing military commanders to deploy landmines in other military operations. In response, Senator Patrick Leahy and Member of the House of Representatives Jim McGovern sent the Secretary of Defense a [joint letter endorsed by 100 other congressional members](#) opposing the change of policy and raising a series of questions regarding any military use of landmines and advancing options for the feasibility of alternatives to such use.

3. EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS IN POPULATED AREAS

International Parliamentary Appeal

In March 2019, the *International Network on Explosive Weapons* released an [International Parliamentary Appeal to prevent human suffering from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas](#). The appeal calls upon governments to 'urgently develop, adopt and implement an international commitment to address this clear and documented pattern of harm by stopping the use of explosive weapons with wide area effects in populated areas and assisting affected people and communities.'

INFO BOX 3:**Risks associated with poorly maintained stockpiles of ammunition, chemicals and pathogens**

The blast at a port warehouse in the Lebanese capital, Beirut, on August 4, 2020, put into clear focus the dangers associated with storage of explosive materials or chemical substances. The detonation of 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate killed some 150 people, wounded thousands and caused destruction across half the city. The explosion was estimated to be equivalent to 1,000 to 1,500 tonnes of TNT, which is about a tenth of the intensity of the Hiroshima nuclear bomb, but far bigger than any blast from a conventional weapon (Incidentally, the blast occurred just two days before the 75th commemoration of the nuclear weapon attack on Hiroshima.) Although the explosion was deemed an accident (the result of mismanagement, incompetence and complacency in the storage of the depot), rather than a deliberate attack, and the chemical that was stored was not intended for bomb manufacturing, it has raised concerns over the potential catastrophic consequences to people, infrastructure, economic livelihoods and to the environment, of poorly maintained stockpiles of potentially explosive materials.

Used for fertiliser, explosive devices in the construction and mining industries, and as an ingredient in bombs, ammonium nitrate is a salt made from ammonium and nitric acid, and it is highly explosive. The Beirut explosion wasn't the first time an accident involving ammonium nitrate caused catastrophic consequences. In 1947, about 2,300 tonnes of the chemical exploded in the port of Texas City as a result of a carelessly flicked cigarette. That detonation caused a chain reaction when a nearby ship, which also carried ammonium nitrate, exploded, setting fires at chemical tanks and oil refineries near the port. The disaster killed an estimated 581 people and injured roughly 3,500 people. It is considered the deadliest industrial accident in US history. Over thirty accidental explosions with ammonium nitrate have occurred in the last 100 years. Next to these accidents, the fertiliser has also been used in numerous terrorist attacks over the years, including the 1995 terrorist bombing in Oklahoma City, US, the 2002 nightclub bombing in Bali, Indonesia, and the bombing by Anders Breivik in Oslo, Norway. Due to its potential use in bomb-making, many countries have strict regulations in place on the storage, maintenance and use of the compound. For example, many European Union nations require ammonium nitrate to be mixed with calcium carbonate to make a safer compound.

The United Nations Secretary-General's Disarmament Agenda also recognises the importance of securing excessive and poorly maintained stockpiles. Action Point 22 sets out four priorities in addressing weapons and ammunition management. While the action point focuses on ammunition in a military context, it opens the door for action on other materials that could be harmful.

Resources:

- [Ratification kit and model legislation for the Cluster Munitions Convention](#), produced by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French and Spanish.
- [Country and international organisation statements on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas](#), compiled by the International Network on Explosive Weapons
- [Key Questions and Answers on a Political Declaration on the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas](#), Human Rights Watch, June 2020
- [Compilation of existing guidelines, best practices and other recommendations aiming at addressing the diversion or illicit use of materials which can be used for Improvised Explosive Devices](#) (IEDs), compiled by the UN Expert Group on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons Protocol II
- *NATO Guidelines for the storage of military ammunition and explosives*, NATO, 2015
- [OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on Conventional Ammunition](#), 2008
- [Counter-IED Capability Maturity Model and Self-Assessment Tool](#), Bob Seddon and Alfredo Malaret, UNIDIR, June 2020

INFO BOX 4:**International humanitarian law, peace 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.*

Law of peace and security

Whereas IHL relates primarily to the laws governing armed conflict once it has begun (known as *jus in bello*), there is also a body of peace and security law (*jus ad bellum*) governing the authority required to engage in armed conflict. It is codified primarily in the UN Charter, Articles 2, 33-38 and 51. Article 2 prohibits the threat or use of force and requires States to resolve international conflicts in peaceful ways. Articles 33-38 outline approaches and mechanisms States and the Security Council should take to resolve conflicts peacefully, and Article 51 provides the exception for when States are permitted to use force, i.e. in response to an attack unless and until the Security Council has taken action to resolve the situation.

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, Peace Law and Human Rights Law to Disarmament

IHL, the law of peace and security 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 recognised in a number of treaties, as well as by the International Court of Justice and the Human Rights Committee. It is also recognised 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.

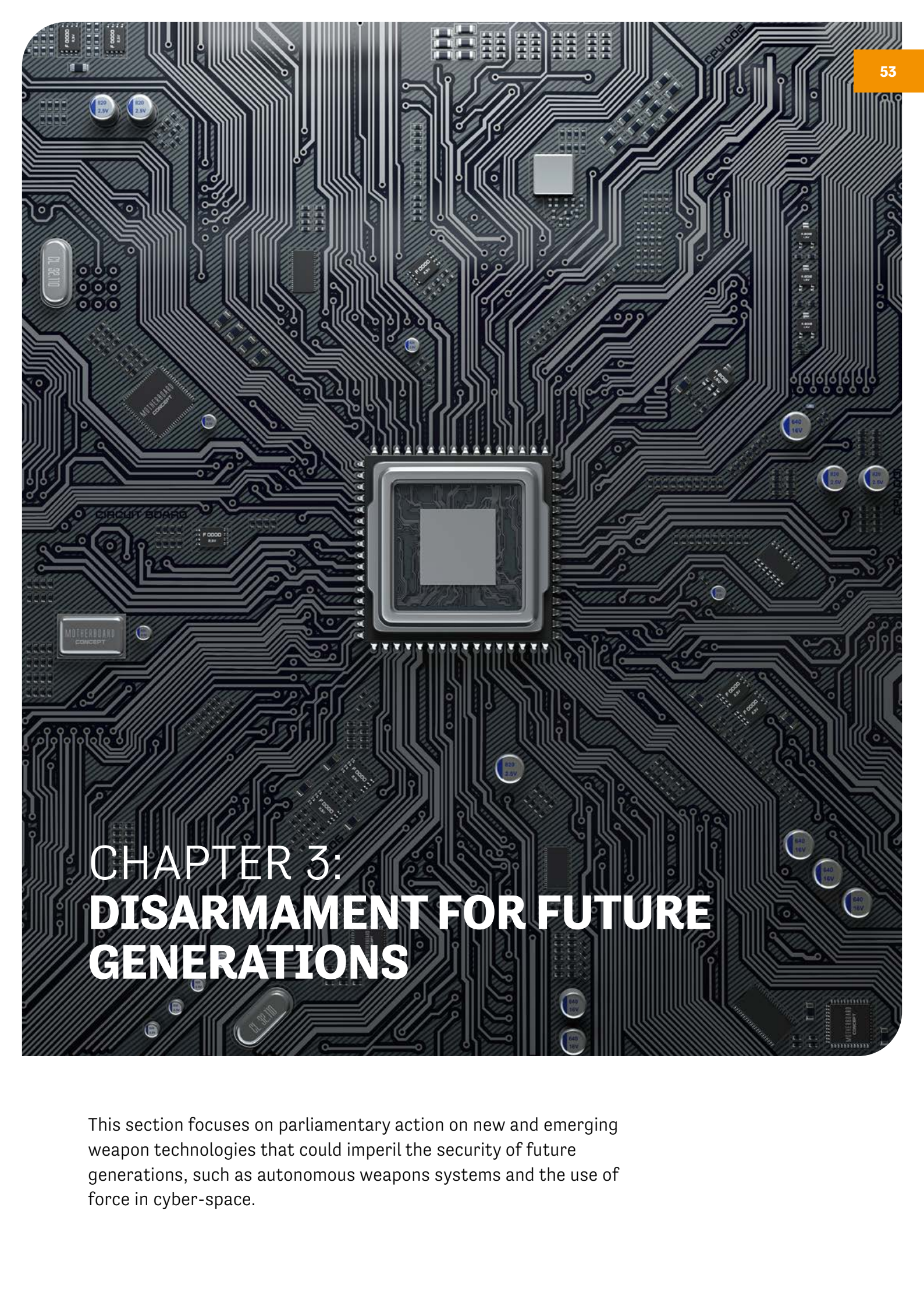
Further application of IHL and Human Rights Law to nuclear disarmament

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 on 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.'*



CHAPTER 3: DISARMAMENT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

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.

There is no question that weapons systems and military operations are increasingly using autonomous aspects and components. However, the development and use of *fully autonomous weapons systems*, sometimes called ‘killer robots’, would seriously challenge and erode confidence in international humanitarian law. How could we be confident that a fully autonomous weapons system could decide correctly on targeting and use of force decisions to ensure protection of civilians, distinction between civilian and military targets, proportionality of response and other constraints under international law? And if a mistake is made by a fully autonomous weapons system, where is the accountability? For these reasons, a preferred approach is to negotiate an international agreement to prohibit fully autonomous weapons systems. Deliberations on such a proposed agreement are currently being undertaken under the auspices of the UN Convention on Conventional Weapons.



Imagine the consequences of an autonomous system that could, by itself, target and attack human beings. I call upon States to ban these weapons, which are politically unacceptable and morally repugnant.

António Guterres, November 11, 2018

Cyber-space is an environment which is increasingly used across all fields of human activity – including military operations. In the military arena, cyberspace can be used to a) attack targets (cyber or physical) of an enemy; b) defend against attacks from an enemy; and c) support physical military systems through information, intelligence and communications. What makes cyber-warfare difficult to address is that the ‘weapons’ of attack are very different to physical weapons systems, and their use is not confined to militaries or governments, making cyberattacks much more difficult to verify, identify and control. It is also quite difficult to determine the distinctions and divisions between cyber-crime, cyber-security and cyber-warfare.

As yet, there is no international treaty governing cyber-warfare. However, it is generally agreed that the rules and principles governing physical warfare, and in particular the rules of international humanitarian law, apply in the cyber-world. The *Tallinn Manual on the international law applicable to cyber warfare*, provides the most comprehensive exploration of how these laws should apply in the cyber-world. In addition, the UN General Assembly has supported the principles of responsible State behaviour in cyber-space outlined in the 2015 report of the Group of Governmental Experts which includes legal constraints on cyberattacks, and has established an Open Ended Working Group (open to all UN Member States) to further consider this issue.

Relevant international agreements and resolutions:

- Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects), also known as the Inhumane Weapons Convention, 1980
- Agreement by the States Parties of the Convention on Conventional Weapons to establish a Group of Government Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, 2013
- UN General Assembly 70/237 adopting the 2015 Report on Group of Government Experts on information and telecommunications in the context of international security, 2015
- UN General Assembly Resolution 73/27 establishing an Open Ended Working Group on information and telecommunications in the context of international security, 2018

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Support measures to ensure that any new weapons system or method of warfare conform to international humanitarian law and other laws of warfare, as well as the principle of human responsibility for matters regarding life and death, and to prohibit the development of weapons systems and methods of warfare which cannot meet these criteria;
- Support negotiations for a treaty prohibiting fully autonomous weapons systems;
- Ensure the full application of international humanitarian law to military uses of cyberspace.

Examples of good parliamentary practice:

IPU Resolution on cyber-warfare and global security, 2015

On April 1, 2015, the IPU adopted a resolution [Cyber Warfare: A Serious Threat to Peace and Global Security](#) at its 132nd Assembly in Hanoi. The resolution, amongst other things:

- acknowledges that ‘*certain principles of public international law, including, in particular, those contained in the United Nations Charter, the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, are relevant and applicable to cyberspace and are essential to maintaining peace and international stability and promoting an open, secure and peaceful ICT environment, accessible to women and men alike,*’
- encourages member parliaments to ‘*make use of all the oversight tools at their disposal to ensure that cyber-related activities are rigorously monitored, and to enact national laws, with due regard for their respective constitutions, that stipulate stiffer penalties for cyberattacks, using appropriate safeguards, governance mechanisms and existing structures so as to protect freedom of expression and not compromise the citizen’s ability to use ICT tools,*’
- calls on States to ‘*comply with international law and the Charter of the United Nations when using ICTs*’
- urges that ‘*at the legislative and executive levels, consideration be given to cooperative measures likely to enhance peace and international stability and security and lead to a common understanding of the application of the relevant international law and derived standards, rules and principles underpinning the responsible conduct of States,*’ and
- ‘*Recommends that parliaments from nuclear-weapon States call on their governments to rescind launch-on-warning policies, stand down nuclear weapons from high operational readiness and extend the decision-making time for nuclear-weapon use in order to prevent unauthorized activation and deployment of nuclear weapon systems through cyberattacks, pursuant to the negotiation of agreements to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons and achieve their elimination.*’



Inter-Parliamentary Union
Standing Committee on Peace and
International Security discussing the
draft resolution on cyber security,
IPU 132nd Assembly, Hanoi, April
2015. Photo: IPU

European Parliament Resolution on autonomous weapons systems, September 2018

On September 12, 2018, the European Parliament adopted [Resolution 2752 \(2018\) on Autonomous Weapons Systems](#). The resolution highlights a number of reasons for prohibiting fully autonomous weapons systems, including that ‘*compliance with international law is a key requirement that states must fulfil, particularly when it comes to upholding principles such as protecting the civilian population or taking precautions in attack,*’ that fully autonomous weapons systems ‘*cannot make human-like decisions involving the legal principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution,*’ and that ‘*it is humans who remain accountable for decisions concerning life and death.*’ The resolution urges the Vice-President of the Commission and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Member States and the Council to work towards the start of international negotiations on a legally binding instrument prohibiting lethal autonomous weapon systems.

Parliamentary declaration supporting a treaty prohibiting fully autonomous weapons

In May 2020, Parliamentarians for Global Action launched a [Global Parliamentary Declaration in Support of the Negotiation of a Treaty on the Prohibition of Fully Autonomous Weapons](#). The declaration, expresses the conviction that ‘*that humans should always bear ultimate responsibility on matters concerning life and death,*’ urges ‘*all UN Member States to engage earnestly in substantive ongoing discussions with a view to launching negotiation of a Treaty on the Prohibition of Fully Autonomous Weapons by the end of 2021 and adopting the Treaty by the end of 2022,*’ and commits the endorsers (as lawmakers) to ‘*draft, implement and enforce legislation which can give full effect to this Treaty, once negotiated.*’

OSCE Parliamentary Assembly Resolution on cyber-attacks and cyber-security, 2013

On June 30, 2013, the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly issued a resolution on cyber security in which, amongst other things, it recognised ‘*the fact that cyber-attacks in any form have become a serious security threat, which cannot be ignored or underestimated,*’ affirmed ‘*that any country that relies extensively on cyberspace might be influenced by cyber-attacks the same way as by conventional acts of aggression*’ and ‘*urges Governments to take a leading role in defending a free and safe cyberspace, unequivocally condemn cyber-attacks and seek common effective solutions to protect cyberspace from misuse and malicious activities.*’ The resolution is contained in the [Istanbul Declaration](#) released by the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on July 3, 2013.

European Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox

The [European Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox](#) is a joint EU initiative to address malicious cyber-activities including cyber-attacks. The EU has reaffirmed ‘*its commitment to the settlement of international disputes in cyberspace by peaceful means.*’ The toolbox aims to promote security and stability in cyber-space through increased international cooperation, and by reducing the risk of misperception, escalation and conflict that may stem from ICT incidents. The Toolbox contributes to strengthening the rules-based order in cyber-space, including the application of international law and the adherence to norms of responsible state behaviour, and provides approaches to conflict prevention and mitigation of cyber-security threats. It embraces the principles of keeping cyber-space open, stable and secure.

INFO BOX 5:**Principles regarding cyber-attacks and cyber-diplomacy**

The *Tallinn Manual*, *ICRC Principles on Application of International Humanitarian Law*, and the 2015 *Report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security*.

The [Tallinn Manual](#) (2013) is a NATO-funded research document authored by an independent group of international law experts and academics. It is a comprehensive analysis of how existing international law applies to cyber-space. The first version of the Tallinn Manual focused on cyber-attacks between States in the context of an armed conflict. The updated 2013 version also addresses cyber-attacks in peacetime and by non-State actors. The Manual outlines international law, especially international humanitarian law and other law governing the use of force (see Info box 3), and assesses its application to cyber-space. The manual also outlines the responsibilities of States to adhere to this law, and to exercise due diligence in applying the law to the use of cyber-space and cyber-space infrastructure by other actors within their jurisdiction or under their control.

The *International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)* has also explored the application of international humanitarian law to cyber-space, including the constraints this body of law places on the military use of cyber-space (See [International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts](#), ICRC, 2015. Chapter VII (i)).

In 2012, the United Nations established a *Group of Government Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (GGE)* with a mandate based on [UNGA Resolution 68/43](#). The GGE produced a substantive consensus report (A/70/174) on norms, rules or principles of the responsible behaviour of States in the cyber-sphere as well as confidence-building measures, international cooperation and capacity-building, which could have wider application to all States. The Report was adopted by the UN under UNGA Resolution 70/237. The report's conclusions include the following principles:

- In their use of ICTs, States must observe, among other principles of international law, State sovereignty, the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States;
- Existing obligations under international law are applicable to State use of ICTs and States must comply with their obligations to respect and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- States must not use proxies to commit internationally wrongful acts using ICTs and should seek to ensure that their territory is not used by non-State actors to commit such acts;
- The UN should play a leading role in promoting dialogue on the security of ICTs in their use by States, and in developing common understandings.

Resources:

- [Tallinn Manual on the international law applicable to cyber warfare](#), Edition 2.0, 2013
- [A Cyber State Peer Review Mechanism for State-Conducted Foreign Cyber Operations](#), ICT4Peace proposal to the *UN OEWG on information and telecommunications in the context of international security*, February 2020
- [The Application of International Law to State Cyberattacks: Sovereignty and Non-Intervention](#), Harriet Moynihan, Chatham House Cyber-Security Project, December 2019
- [Key elements of a Treaty on Fully Autonomous Weapons](#), Campaign to stop Killer Robots, November 2019
- [ICT4Peace Call on Governments to refrain from Offensive Cyber Operations against Critical Infrastructure](#), October 2019
- [International humanitarian law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts](#), ICRC, 2015. See Chapter VII (i) for cyber-warfare and Chapter VII (ii)
- [United Nations portal for cyber-security](#) – United Nations developments, documents and processes in the field of information, telecommunications and international security
- [UNIDIR Cyber Policy Portal](#), includes links to Multilateral Frameworks for cyber-security
- [INCYDER Strategy and Governance Database](#). This database includes a directory of national cyber-security agencies and selected national policy documents
- [A Treaty for cyber-space](#), Rex Hughes, Chatham House Cyber-Security Project, 2010
- [Pledge by over 160 Artificial Intelligence related companies and organisations and 2,400 scientists](#) to ‘neither participate in nor support the development, manufacture, trade, or use of lethal autonomous weapons.’ Future of Life Institute



CHAPTER 4: **STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS**

Parliamentarians cannot achieve disarmament by themselves. Successful and sustainable disarmament policies will require engagement of and with other key actors. This section focuses on parliamentary action to educate and engage key constituencies in disarmament processes and to strengthen the partnerships between parliamentarians, inter-parliamentary organisations and the United Nations.

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Engage with key constituencies including mayors and other legislators, women, youth, religious leaders, business leaders, industry experts, academics and other civil society representatives, when undertaking disarmament events and actions;
- Advance disarmament in regional parliaments and inter-parliamentary organisations (see [Info box 6](#) on page 66);
- Engage in UN disarmament processes as part of national delegations or parliamentary delegations;
- Support the national implementation of disarmament and non-proliferation education;
- Organise parliamentary events or motions to observe UN Days related to disarmament.

Relevant international agreements and UN resolutions:

- UN Security Council Resolution 2250 on Youth, peace and security, 2015
- UN Security Council Resolution 2419 on Youth, conflict prevention and conflict resolution, 2018
- UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, peace and security, 2000
- UN Security Council Resolution 2493 on Women, peace and security, 2019
- UN General Assembly resolution on Youth, Disarmament and Non-proliferation, 2019
- UN General Assembly resolution on Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, 2018
- United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education, adopted by [UNGA resolution A/57/124](#), December 2002

Examples of good parliamentary practice:

1. BUILDING COOPERATION WITH MAYORS

European appeal of mayors and parliamentarians

On January 30, 2019, mayors, parliamentarians, policy experts and civil society representatives from forty countries – mostly Europe and North America – sent an open letter, the [Basel Appeal for Disarmament and Sustainable Security](#), to Presidents Putin and Trump and to the leaders of the Russian and US legislatures.

The letter called on them to preserve the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, prevent a new nuclear arms race in Europe and undertake measures to reduce the risk of a nuclear conflict and support global nuclear disarmament.



Legislators in nuclear armed States have a specific role to prevent authorization and funding for new more sophisticated and usable nuclear weapons that increase the risk of destruction of humanity by accident, miscalculation or intent.

Paul Quiles (France), Mayor of Cordes sur Ciel, President of [Initiatives pour le Désarmement Nucléaire](#), and Former Defence Minister of France.



Mayors and parliamentarians, especially those of us from Europe, will not sit idly on the side while the US and Russia erode our security. Cities and parliaments are therefore taking action to support nuclear arms control treaties such as the INF and START treaties, promote additional measures such as no-first-use and the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and to put an end to city and state investments in nuclear weapons corporations.

Thore Vestby (Norway), Vice-President of [Mayors for Peace](#). Former Mayor of Frogn and Member of the Norwegian parliament.

2. ENSURING PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PEACE AND DISARMAMENT

The UN Secretary-General's report *Securing our Common Future*, notes the importance of gender and disarmament, including to empower women and ensure their equal and meaningful participation in disarmament and arms control decision-making processes. This can lead to more inclusive, effective and sustainable policy outcomes.

Bougainville peace and arms disposal agreement, 2001

From 1988 to 1998, a civil war was fought in Bougainville, a province of Papua-New Guinea (PNG), between the PNG military and the secessionist forces of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). The conflict resulted in the deaths of approximately 20,000 Bougainvilleans. The PNG military fought with weapons bought from Australia, Belgium, the UK and the US. The BRA fought mostly with weapons left in Bougainville by the Japanese in the Second World War. The inclusion of women (primarily non-combatants) in the peace negotiations was instrumental in achieving a peace and small arms disarmament/disposal agreement in 2001, and in assuring its sustainability. See *The role of women in promoting peace and reconciliation*, Lorraine Garasu, in [Women building peace](#), 2013 and [Soldiers Without Guns – Women of Bougainville](#), 2019.



UN SC resolution 1325 stresses the essential role of women in peace making and conflict resolution. COVID-19 has exposed our vulnerabilities as nation states. Global security is not achievable by war and military might. It requires global cooperation and mutual trust. Women parliamentarians call for multilateralism to replace conflict and for spending on arms to be redirected to building strong responses to health and climate disasters. We are stronger together.

Hon. Hedy Fry, P.C., MP. (Canada). Special Representative on Gender Issues for the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly.

International women legislators' appeals for peace and disarmament, 2008 and 2018

In 2008, the five Co-Presidents of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), all of whom were women, released a joint appeal [The priority of peace and disarmament for the global community](#), on Women's International Day for Peace and Disarmament (May 24) and presented it to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Berlin. The appeal highlighted the goals of the United Nations for a world of peace and security through disarmament, called on all countries to join the international treaties banning landmines and cluster munitions, urged nuclear-reliant states to build security without reliance on nuclear weapons and highlighted the importance of involving women at all levels of conflict resolution and peace-making as promoted by UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

In 2018, PNND organised a similar appeal, [Common security for a sustainable and nuclear-weapon-free world](#), endorsed by over 50 leading women legislators from around the world, which also commemorated the 175th birthday of Bertha von Suttner, the first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. The appeal was presented to the United Nations.



The United Nations was established with an array of mechanisms through which nations can resolve conflicts, negotiate disarmament and achieve security through diplomacy not war. These have been supplemented by additional common security mechanisms such as the [Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe](#). A better use of these mechanisms could help facilitate nuclear disarmament.

Baroness Sue Miller, UK House of Lords. Endorser of *Common Security for a sustainable and nuclear-weapon-free world*

IPU policy on gender representation

Since 2003, the Inter-Parliamentary Union has implemented a policy of sanctions on parliamentary delegations to the IPU Assemblies that do not include both male and female representatives on their delegations. The sanctions imposed amount to a reduction in the voting power of delegations that are single-gender. This has helped build gender-parity on parliamentary delegations to the assembly and in the various committees, including the Standing Committee on Peace and International Security, which deliberates on disarmament issues. In 2017, the IPU also adopted guidelines on gender representation on panels, including panels relating to peace and disarmament.

3. BUILDING COOPERATION WITH RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND COMMUNITIES

Joint appeal and events of legislators and religious leaders, 2015-2017

On August 6, 2015, in commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima, a group of mayors, parliamentarians and religious leaders released a joint appeal in Hiroshima, [A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: Our Common Good](#), calling upon world leaders to commit to nuclear abolition and to replace nuclear deterrence with shared security approaches to conflicts. The appeal, which highlighted the complementary roles of mayors, parliamentarians and religious leaders to advance nuclear abolition, was presented to various UN forums (Open Ended Working Group, UN General Assembly, Non-Proliferation Treaty review meetings) in conjunction with joint events involving mayors, parliamentarians and religious leaders from 2015-2018.

4. ENGAGING AND EMPOWERING YOUTH



Third Inter-Parliamentary Union Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians. Lusaka, Zambia, March 2016. Photo: IPU

IPU Forum of Young Parliamentarians

In 2013, the Inter-Parliamentary Union established a Forum of Young Parliamentarians to boost the participation of young people in parliaments and to help ensure young MPs play a full part in discussions and action on issues addressed by parliament, including peace, disarmament and security. Amongst the events organised by the Youth Forum to date, is the [3rd IPU Global Conference of Young Parliamentarians](#) held in Lusaka, Zambia in March 2016, which focused on *peace, disarmament and sustainable development*.

5. DISARMAMENT EDUCATION

New Zealand: Disarmament education and the United Nations

The New Zealand Parliament, in its *Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, Arms Control and Disarmament Legislation 1987*, established a *Public Advisory Committee on Disarmament and Arms Control* with one of the tasks to support public education on disarmament and arms control. The Committee administers two funds – the *Peace and Disarmament Education Trust (PADET)*, which is financed from compensation money from the French government for their terrorist act in 1985 against the Greenpeace ship in Auckland harbour, and the *Disarmament Education United Nations Implementation Fund (DEUNIF)*, established by direct budget vote to implement the recommendations of the *2002 UN Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education*.

Bahrain: Scientific Research Award on curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction

In 2020, the Bahrain parliament and the Bahrain Foreign Ministry established a [Scientific Research Award](#) on curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The award aims to support research on non-proliferation by university students in the Kingdom of Bahrain undertaking Master's and Bachelor's programmes in the fields of chemical engineering, political science or international relations.

6. PARLIAMENTARY EVENTS TO COMMEMORATE UN DAYS

The United Nations [designates specific days](#) (and also specific weeks, years and decades) to mark particular events or topics in order to promote awareness about, and action on, the issues and relevant UN objectives and initiatives. There are a number of United Nations Days/Weeks related to disarmament including the International Day Against Nuclear Tests (August 29), International Day of Peace (September 21), International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (September 26) and UN Disarmament Week (October 24-30). (See [Appendix VII](#) on page 86 for a full list.) Examples of parliamentary events/actions to commemorate these days include:

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

On September 29, 2015, the **Jordan Senate** held a [special event to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons](#). The event, which was attended by all senators, included a screening of movie [The Man who saved the World](#), which chronicles the incident on September 26, 1983, when a nuclear weapons exchange nearly occurred due to satellite information received by the Russian nuclear command and control centre, falsely indicating an incoming US nuclear attack.

On September 26, 2019, **Bill Kidd MSP** [introduced a motion into the Scottish parliament](#), co-sponsored by 23 other members of parliament, commemorating the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, supporting the call of the UN on states for the total elimination of nuclear weapons for the purposes of peace and security, and highlighting the [Move the Nuclear Weapons Money campaign](#) to drastically reduce the \$100 billion spent on nuclear weapons globally, and shift these resources to help end poverty, protect the climate and build global peace.

International Day against Nuclear Tests

To commemorate the International Day Against Nuclear Tests in 2012, the Parliament of Kazakhstan and PNND organised an [international conference in Astana](#) of 120 parliamentarians from 70 countries, including from most of the nuclear-armed States and their allies. The conference launched the [ATOM Project](#), an international campaign to create awareness surrounding the human and environmental devastation caused by nuclear weapons testing. The campaign is led by citizens impacted by the Soviet nuclear tests undertaken in Kazakhstan. In 2019, the ATOM Project, PNND and Mayors for Peace organised a [UK tour to commemorate the International Day Against Nuclear Tests](#), which included an art exhibition by Karipbek Kuyukov, Honorary Ambassador of the ATOM Project, plus other events in the UK Parliament, Scottish parliament and Manchester City Council.



” The Atom Project is led by its Ambassador Karipbek Kuyukov, the renowned artist who suffered very significant physical effects of nuclear weapons testing in his birthplace of Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. I was honoured to host Mr Kuyukov and officials from his country in the Scottish Parliament last year, during which time Mr Kuyukov gave a powerful speech and displayed some of his artworks to a large and appreciative audience. The experience of Mr Kuyukov and the millions of others in Kazakhstan impacted by the nuclear tests illustrates the assertion of the First Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev that, *‘Winning wars with atomic weapons is an illusion. No one can win, but everyone will lose.’*

Bill Kidd MSP, Scotland. Photo: PNND

UN Disarmament Week

In 2019, parliamentarians in the UK, US and New Zealand co-hosted [Count the Nuclear Weapons Money actions](#) which took place during the seven days of UN Disarmament Week. This involved physically counting out over 500,000 mock notes of \$1 million each, representing the global nuclear weapons budget for the next 5 years, and symbolically re-allocating these to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. US Senator Markey and Congressman Earl Blumenauer used the occasion of UN Disarmament Week to re-introduce the [Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditure \(SANE\) Act](#) into the US Congress.



Count the Nuclear Weapons Money event, New York, October 2019. Photo: PNND

7. UNITED NATIONS, TREATY BODIES AND PARLIAMENTARY ORGANISATIONS

Parliamentarians can make key contributions to international affairs by engaging in international forums to develop cooperative and effective approaches to disarmament issues, and then following up with national implementation. Below are a few examples. A more in-depth discussion on parliamentary engagement in international affairs can be found in the IPU publication [Parliamentary Involvement in International Affairs](#).



Mayors for Peace and PNND release a joint appeal to the NPT Review Conference, at a UN press conference in May 2005. From left to right: Taib Ali Taib Bajaber, Mayor of Mombasa, Kenya; Mr. Dennis Kucinich, Member of the US House of Representatives and Aaron Tovish, Campaign Manager of Mayors for Peace. Photo: UN Photo/Rick Bajornas

Parliamentary participation in UN and treaty-body meetings

Participation in UN and treaty-body disarmament meetings is an effective way for parliamentarians to build deeper understanding of the issues, processes and government positions. Such an understanding can enable parliamentarians to develop more effective policy approaches to the issues. Some governments make it a practice to include parliamentarians on their delegations to key UN and treaty-based meetings, and this practice is to be encouraged. For other parliamentarians, participation can be possible by joining the delegation of a relevant parliamentary organisation or civil society organisation that has credentials for the meeting.

IPU Annual UN Hearings

The Inter-Parliamentary Union holds an annual meeting at the UN to inform and engage member parliaments of key UN issues and processes, including those related to disarmament. Parliamentarians are encouraged to make use of this opportunity, either as a member of their parliament's delegation to the IPU UN Hearings, or through consultation with the delegation.

United Nations Associations and UNFOLD ZERO

There are also civil society organisations focused on the UN and disarmament, including [national United Nations Associations](#), and [UNFOLD ZERO](#), a platform advancing United Nations initiatives and processes for nuclear disarmament. These civil society organisations welcome engagement with parliamentarians.

8. REGIONAL PARLIAMENTS AND INTER-PARLIAMENTARY ORGANISATIONS

Regional parliaments and inter-parliamentary organisations are useful and effective forums for undertaking dialogue, enhancing engagement, sharing good practice and building cooperation amongst parliamentarians and parliaments on disarmament issues, policies and initiatives. Such action helps to build regional and global adherence to, and implementation of, disarmament treaties and agreements.

This handbook already includes examples of effective action from some of the regional parliaments and inter-parliamentary organisations, in particular the Inter-Parliamentary Union, European Parliament and Parliamentary Assembly of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe. There are many examples of such action in other regional parliaments and inter-parliamentary organisations, which are not able to be included in this handbook for reasons of space, but some of which will be added to the online version. See below for a list of such organisations.

INFO BOX 6:

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



CHAPTER 5: **DISARMAMENT, CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

This section focuses on the positive contributions disarmament can make to climate protection and sustainable development. This includes the ways that disarmament can help reduce carbon emissions from global militaries, the contributions that disarmament can play in protecting livelihoods and the physical environment, and the financial benefits to economies and sustainable development that can arise from cuts to military budgets.

Disarmament is critical for sustainable development (see Info box 1), and must be included in SDG dialogues, processes and forums. Disarmament is especially important for climate protection. Global weapons production and military operations contribute at least 5% of the world's carbon emissions. The US military alone produces more carbon emissions than most countries in the world, including industrialised countries like Sweden, Switzerland and Norway (See [Pentagon Fuel Use, Climate Change, and the Costs of War](#) and [The U.S. Military Emits More CO2 Than Many Industrialized Nations](#)). In addition, military deployment and armed conflict between nations are often related to protecting oil supplies, contributing further to a fossil-fuel based economy that is destroying the climate. Finally, the huge budgets, investments and human capital dedicated to weapons production and the military, drain resources that are required to address climate change and achieve the SDGs.

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Ensure that disarmament issues and objectives are included in national and international forums on addressing climate change and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Require reviews of the military carbon footprint from their defence ministries, along with plans to reduce carbon emissions;
- Consider ways to reduce defence budgets in order to liberate resources for climate protection and sustainable development;
- Develop policies or guidelines for sovereign wealth funds and other financial institutions managing public funds, which would prioritise divestment from controversial weapons (e.g., nuclear, landmines, cluster munitions) and would prioritise impact investment to support climate protection and sustainable development;
- Support economic conversion programmes to protect jobs and social cohesion when cuts are made to defence spending or military forces.



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.

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

Relevant international agreements:

- Article 26 of the UN Charter, 1945
- 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
- UNGA resolution 74/57: Relationship between disarmament and development, adopted 2019

Examples of good parliamentary practice:

Economic conversion: US Congress and military base closures, Public Law 101-510

As détente developed between the USSR and United States at the end of the 1980s, the US government began a programme of downsizing the armed forces and closing military bases. This expanded when the Cold War came to an end with the dissolution of the USSR. In order to protect jobs and economies in the localities of the bases to be closed, the US Congress adopted economic conversion programmes to accompany the base closures. One example is public law 101-510 adopted in 1990. In many cases the economic conversion programmes succeeded not only in maintaining jobs and the economy, but in bringing additional social benefits to the communities.



Several military base reuse projects have explicitly used smart growth techniques to plan redevelopment. The former Lowry Air Force Base outside of Denver is now a flourishing community that preserves its military history and honors its heritage as a training center with several educational institutions. It also has homes, shops, offices, and parks, all of which are welcome additions to the surrounding neighborhoods. Orlando's former Naval Training Center has become Baldwin Park, an award-winning neighborhood that truly feels like a community, with new, much-needed homes, eco-logically important habitat, shopping, and offices – all just 2 miles from downtown Orlando.

From [Turning Bases into Great Places: New life for closed military facilities](#), US Environmental Protection Agency, 2006

UK Parliament event: Defence diversification and nuclear disarmament

On June 26, 2018, Fabian Hamilton MP (Shadow Minister for Peace and Disarmament) hosted an event in the UK House of Commons to release a report on the possibilities for economic conversion of the UK nuclear weapons industry. The report, [Defence Diversification: International learning for Trident jobs](#), examines defence diversification and conversion projects around the world and applies this experience to the UK. It concludes that the work skills, jobs, technology and infrastructure of the nuclear weapons industry could be converted or transferred to other sectors of the economy, providing a net benefit to the UK.



It is not yet Labour Party policy to scrap Trident. However, isn't it better for the UK to shift the skills and industry we have for massive death and destruction to be used instead for enhancing life? I am committed, not only to transitioning away from nuclear weapons, but to protecting jobs at the same time.

Fabian Hamilton MP, June 26, 2018

Nuclear weapons divestment: New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland

In at least four countries – Lichtenstein, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland – the parliaments and governments have adopted measures curtailing investments in the nuclear weapons industry. In New Zealand, these measures apply to the national bank (Kiwi Bank) and publicly administered funds including Accident Compensation Commission, Superannuation Fund, Peace and Disarmament Education Trust and the Pacific Conservation Trust. In Norway, the measures apply to the Government Pension Fund Global. In Switzerland, the adopted legislation (Swiss War Materials Act 2012) has led to divestment by most of the country's pension funds from the nuclear weapons industry. The financial performance of the funds following divestment has remained high, with no negative impact from the divestment measures.

US: Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures (SANE) Act

On October 30, 2019, US Senator Ed Markey and Member of the House of Representatives Earl Blumenauer reintroduced the [Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditures \(SANE\) Act](#) in the U.S. Congress. The purpose of the Act is to improve national security and budgetary sanity by cutting redundant and destabilising nuclear weapons programmes. It would cut \$75 billion from the nuclear weapons budget over the next decade. The Act has been introduced into every US Congress since 2014. It has yet to receive sufficient support in Congress to be adopted.



The US should fund education, not annihilation; that is our future. We need sanity when crafting America's budget priorities, and more and improved nuclear weapons defies common sense. The SANE Act cuts nuclear weapons and delivery systems that we don't need so we can invest in the people and programs that will make America safe and prosperous in the future.

US Senator Ed Markey

Move the Nuclear Weapons Money

On October 18, 2016, the Inter-Parliamentary Union hosted an event to launch [Move the Nuclear Weapons Money](#), an international campaign to cut nuclear weapons budgets, end investments in the nuclear weapons industry and re-direct these resources to supporting climate protection and sustainable development. The campaign includes public education as well as policy action and advocacy. It combines and expands work previously done on these issues by the partner organisations. The campaign also cooperates with the global fossil fuel divestment campaign in order to assist in shifting investments from the fossil fuel industry to the renewable energy industry.



Resources:

- IPU declaration: [Placing democracy at the service of peace and sustainable development: Building the world the people want](#), adopted by the 4th World Conference of Speakers of Parliament, United Nations, September 2015
- [Move the Nuclear Weapons Money, A handbook for civil society and legislators](#), published by the International Peace Bureau, PNND and the World Future Council, 2016
- [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, International Peace Bureau, 2014
- [Warfare or Welfare: Disarmament for Development in the 21st 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
- [UN Report on Military Expenditures](#)
- [Military Base Closures: A Historical Review from 1988 to 1995](#), US Congressional Report Service, 2004



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

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



” Our world is currently hit by a dreadful pandemic which will have important socio-economic consequences which add to the challenges facing the global community, in fact the whole of humanity, including future generations. The management of the pandemic and advancing general and complete disarmament are very much interlinked. Armed conflict and weapons proliferation impede our efforts to contain the pandemic and address its health and economic impacts. Parliaments, as institutions representing the people, will need to make progress on disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control to protect public health, limit military spending and increase investment in the mitigation of the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2030 Agenda for Development in order to ensure people’s well-being.

Gabriela Cuevas Barron, IPU President (2017–2020). Photo: IPU

Recommendations:

Parliamentarians can:

- Support the UN Secretary-General’s initiative for a global ceasefire;
- Support budgetary allocations to COVID-19 containment and management, and to economic recovery, and to consider reducing military budgets in order to liberate resources required to address the pandemic;
- Support a moratorium on military weapons production and supply during the pandemic;
- Support measures to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention (including at the next Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference) in order to ensure prevention of virus outbreaks from military sources, and to enable more effective cooperation in addressing future pandemics regardless of whether they originated from military or civilian sources.

Relevant UN agreements, resolutions 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, 1972

Examples of good parliamentary practice:

US Senate letter to invoke Defense Production Act of 1950

On March 15, 2020, US Senator Ed Markey sent a [public letter to President Trump](#) highlighting the lack of medical equipment and supplies to test US residents for COVID-19 and to treat those infected. Senator Markey proposed that the President invoke the *Defense Production Act of 1950* to mandate increased industrial production of ventilators, masks, virus tests and other pandemic related medical supplies. The US Administration was originally reluctant to interfere in industry in this way, but relented to the growing congressional and public support for the measure, and so moved to [invoke the Act on March 18](#).

Thailand: Cutting military budget to liberate resources to address COVID-19 pandemic

In September 2020, the National Assembly of Thailand adopted a budget allocation for defence and national security for B.E. 2564 (fiscal year October 2020 – September 2021) which was 2.23% lower than the defence and national security budget of B.E. 2563 (fiscal year October 2019 – September 2020) (425,513 mil THB). This trimming of the budget, focusing on the military works which are not urgent, was made to support a diversion of government funds to tackle COVID-19.

**Women’s appeal
for human security,
public health, peace
& sustainable
development**

On May 24, 2020, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, Women Legislators’ Lobby and the World Future Council released a [Women’s Appeal on Human security for public health, peace and sustainable development](#), endorsed by 250 women legislators, religious leaders and civil society leaders. The appeal expressed deep concern about the humanitarian and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, supported the UN in its 75th anniversary year, including as a principle institution to assist nations in addressing the pandemic, underscored the key role of women in peace and disarmament, affirmed the importance of diplomacy, common security and law to address security issues rather than the threat or use of armed force or punitive sanctions, and highlighted the importance of cutting military expenditures in order to focus budgets on human security issues such as COVID-19, climate change and sustainable development.

” The pandemic has undeniably demonstrated that key issues of human security cannot be resolved through military means, or independently by nations, but require global cooperation, diplomacy and peace. The United Nations, and its agencies like the World Health Organisation, and UN Environment Programme are vital for building such cooperation and peace. They must be better supported.

Alexandra Wandel, Executive Director, World Future Council

” Our priorities are clear – It’s time to stop lining defense contractors’ pockets and spending vital taxpayer dollars on nuclear weapons. Instead, we must use the resources to support economic recovery from the pandemic. We will need global cooperation to rebuild our nations. Women legislators, religious leaders, and civil society organizations are championing the call for human security.

Jennifer Blemur, Director, Women Legislators’ Lobby

**Global weapons
freeze**

In March 2020, in response to the UN Secretary-General’s initiative for a global ceasefire to better address the COVID-19 pandemic, the Strategic Concept for the Removal of Arms Proliferation (SCRAP) launched [#FreezeWeaponsNow](#), a call on States, corporations and parliaments for a moratorium on the production and supply of military weapons. The call is supported by Pope Francis, Gabriela Cuevas Barron (President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2017–2020) and many civil society organisations. The campaign includes a [model resolution for parliaments](#).

**United States:
Defense Spending
Reduction Caucus**

In July 2020, Senators Bernie Sanders and Ed Markey introduced Senate Amendment 1788 to cut the US military budget by 10% and redirect this to support housing, education, and other vital human needs in communities in which the poverty rate is 25% or more. These are communities hit worst by the COVID-19 pandemic. Members of the House of Representatives Barbara Lee and Mark Pocan introduced a similar House Amendment (#HR562). Both amendments were lost. However, building on the strong support in the House, Lee and Pocan established a Defense Spending Reduction Caucus to ‘*serve as an organizing point to continue demanding reductions to the Pentagon’s bloated defense budget.*’

” Wasteful defense spending does not make our communities safer – it only weakens our ability to respond to crises. Black and Brown people continue to be the ones that suffer most. We can’t keep spending billions for weapons while leaving our people defenseless against COVID. The Defense Spending Reduction Caucus will support our efforts to redirect wasteful defense spending toward investing in human needs.

US Representative Barbara Lee

UN global ceasefire initiative

On March 23, 2020, the UN Secretary-General launched an initiative for a global ceasefire in order to enable authorities to better contain the COVID-19 pandemic and address its health, social and economic impacts. The initiative included a political appeal to warring parties in armed conflicts to adopt a ceasefire, plus the engagement of Special Envoys in conflict zones to work with the parties to the conflict in order to facilitate agreement and implementation of ceasefires in the zones.

IPU joint statement supporting a global ceasefire

On April 10, 2020, the Inter-Parliamentary Union released a [statement supporting the UN global ceasefire initiative](#), endorsed jointly by Gabriela Cuevas Barron, President of the IPU (2017-2020); José Ignacio Echániz, President of the IPU Committee on Peace and International Security; and Reinhold Lopatka, President of the IPU High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism.



Peace is crucial to secure our health systems, humanitarian assistance and to minimize the economic devastation around the world. Furthermore, terrorist groups should not be allowed to take advantage of this situation. We have to prevent the use of the coronavirus pandemic as a terror tool, utilized by extremist groups. That is why, we urge all warring parties to pull back from hostilities, comply fully with International Humanitarian Law and open a precious window for diplomacy... There should be only one fight in our world today: the shared one against COVID-19. This battle requires global unity, solidarity and cooperation. It is necessary to put health and the fight against the pandemic ahead and on the top of every country's agenda. We have to end war and terrorism and fight the disease together.

IPU statement supporting the ceasefire initiative

A number of national parliaments and parliamentary groups have also expressed supported for the ceasefire initiative. Below are two examples:

Bahrain Parliamentary Group



The Kingdom of Bahrain and the Bahrain Parliamentary Group support the call made by António Guterres on the 23rd of March of this year for a "global cease-fire" in order to face the common enemy (Covid-19), which did not differentiate between nationality, race, faction or religion, but had rather relentlessly attacked everyone while conflict was raging in some regions of the world. Therefore, the Kingdom supports this initiative of an immediate global ceasefire in all parts of the world, and putting an end to armed conflicts and the cessation of all hostilities, thus helping the world focus on facing this common enemy, and contributing at the same time to paving the way for comprehensive, global and sustainable disarmament that eradicates wars.

Bahrain Parliamentary Group statement

Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons



We welcome *Securing Our Common Future*, the Disarmament Agenda launched by United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) in 2018, and we call for warring parties around the world to agree to the UNSG's appeal of March 2020 for a global ceasefire to help combat the Coronavirus pandemic. It should be accompanied with significant cuts in the production and trade of conventional weapons and small arms, with the goal of achieving sustainable world peace and reducing violence.

Hon. Daisy Lilián Tourné Valdez (Uruguay), President, Parliamentary Forum Small Arms and Light Weapons

Resources:

- [How does COVID-19 relate to biological weapons?](#) Marc Finaud, GCSP
- [COVID-19 shows that the Biological Weapons Convention must be strengthened](#), Carlo Trezza, Former Italian Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament
- [PGA Campaign for Universality and Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention \(BWC\) & Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 \(2004\)](#)

INFO BOX 7:**Pandemics and the Biological Weapons Convention**

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) was adopted primarily to confront the threat of deliberate deployment of such weapons by rogue States. It is supported by UN Security Council Resolution 1540, which was adopted to prevent the spread of biological, chemical or nuclear weapons to non-State actors. Most disarmament treaties establish verification, enforcement and technical support measures that ensure compliance with the treaty and provide other spin-off benefits. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation, for example, established an international monitoring network that can detect whether a seismic incident is a nuclear test, or an earthquake or other event. The network can also give advance warning of Tsunamis in the case of earthquakes, and provide information on radiation dispersal from nuclear accidents such as the Fukushima accident.

If the BWC had established a system for verifying the treaty, that system could have been used early in the COVID-19 pandemic to help the WHO determine the nature of the virus, determine whether or not the virus had a military origin, and assist in developing proper virus containment measures. The problem is that the BWC has not established such a verification system. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for the BWC to be strengthened in both verification and compliance measures in order to ensure a better global response to biological incidents such as novel viruses, regardless of whether these emerge from military or non-military sources.

Parliamentarians can support the adoption of such measures, especially as part of the BWC Review Conferences (see [Section B, Chapter 2](#)).

INFO BOX 8:**Comments by UN Secretary-General António Guterres to the UN Security Council on the COVID-19 pandemic and the Biological Weapons Convention**

JULY 2, 2020

'The pandemic also highlights the risks of bioterrorist attacks, and has already shown some of the ways in which preparedness might fall short if a disease were to be deliberately manipulated to be more virulent, or intentionally released in multiple places at once. So, as we consider how to improve our response to future disease threats, we should also devote serious attention to preventing the deliberate use of diseases as weapons.'

*The Biological Weapons Convention codifies a strong and longstanding norm against the abhorrent use of disease as a weapon, and now has 183 States Parties. **I urge the 14 States that have not yet joined the Convention to do so without any further delay.***



We also need to strengthen the Convention, which lacks an oversight institution and contains no verification provisions, by enhancing its role as a forum for the consideration of preventative measures, robust response capacities and effective counter-measures. Fortunately, the best counter to biological weapons is effective action against naturally occurring diseases. Strong public and veterinary health systems are not only an essential tool against COVID-19, but also an effective deterrent against the development of biological weapons.

All of these issues must be on the agenda next year at the Convention's Review Conference. At the moment, the Secretary-General's Mechanism, established by the General Assembly and endorsed by the Security Council, is the only instrument that provides a framework for an investigation of alleged use of biological weapons. Security Council Resolution 1540 and its follow-ups remain a key component of the international non-proliferation architecture, and have provided an overarching framework to prevent the nightmare scenario of bioterrorism.

Given the speed at which pathogens spread in an interconnected world, we must ensure that all countries have resilient and appropriate capacities to respond quickly and robustly to any potential global and deliberate biological event....'

[Full speech](#) by the UN Secretary-General. Photo: UN Photo/Evan Schneider

ASSURING OUR COMMON FUTURE

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

Annexes

I. List of recommendations for parliamentarians

Chapter 1: Disarmament to save humanity

a) Nuclear Weapons

Parliamentarians can:

- Support the full ratification and entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty;
- Ensure adequate assistance to victims and environmental remediation from nuclear tests;
- Support negotiations on a fissile materials treaty;
- Urge the nuclear armed states to reduce the operational readiness to use nuclear weapons, and to make deeper, faster and irreversible cuts to all types of nuclear weapons;
- Work with governments to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines;
- Promote the establishment of additional nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially one in the Middle East;
- Work with their governments and civil society to strengthen the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and ensure success of the NPT review conferences;
- Urge their governments to commence negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or a similar package of agreements for the phased prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international control;
- Encourage governments, especially of non-nuclear States, to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and adopt effective national implementation measures;
- Cooperate with civil society to build awareness about nuclear weapons risks and the need for nuclear disarmament, including through commemoration of the UN Day against Nuclear Tests, UN Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and other relevant days;
- Examine national budgets to facilitate these goals.

b) Chemical and Biological weapons

Parliamentarians can:

- Encourage universal ratification of the Biological Weapons Convention and Chemical Weapons Convention;
- Consider and approve comprehensive national legislation for the BWC and CWC (if not already adopted), and undertake parliamentary oversight and reviews of national implementation;
- Make use of existing model legislation and/or expertise to review the adequacy or otherwise of already enacted legislation and modify, as necessary;
- Seek regular briefings/consultations from relevant government ministries on steps being taken to implement and enforce UNSCR 1540, including advise from the ministries on how Parliamentarians can further facilitate implementation and enforcement;
- Review and contribute to their governments' National Reports on UNSCR 1540 Implementation, and avail of the expertise offered by the UNSCR 1540 Committee in this regard.

c) Outer Space

Parliamentarians can:

- Adopt space launch regulations (in countries that host space launch facilities) to prohibit the launch of payloads that would contribute to the weaponization of outer space or the threat or use of force in outer space including attacks on satellites, or the command and control of nuclear weapons systems;
- Promote an optional protocol to the Outer Space Treaty to prohibit the placement of any weapons in space;
- Promote UN negotiations on an International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities;
- Support a ban on the development and testing of anti-satellite weapons.

Chapter 2: Disarmament that saves lives

a) Conventional weapons and the arms trade

Parliamentarians can:

- Call on their government to submit full reports of their conventional arms holdings and arms transfers to the UN Register of Conventional Arms;
- Work for the signature and ratification by their country of the Arms Trade Treaty, if their country is not already a party to the Treaty;
- Adopt regulations to ensure that all arms transfers are consistent with the Arms Trade Treaty, and monitor the implementation of these regulations;
- Propose reductions in national weapons production and acquisition, with greater emphasis being placed on diplomacy and international law to achieve national security;
- Apply a moratorium on production, trade and supply of weapons during the COVID-19 pandemic.

b) Small arms and light weapons

Parliamentarians can:

- Review and propose amendments to current SALW related legislation.
- Call on their government to submit full reports to the UN PoA and ATT, emphasising the importance of transparency as a tool of building trust amongst countries.
- Exercise the oversight function vis-à-vis the government, focusing on the implementation of relevant conventional arms control instruments.
- Consult relevant authorities on the implementation of national SALW policies, in particular follow up with national SALW commissions, where existent.
- Actively promote and participate in awareness-raising campaigns on the issue of SALW proliferation, putting an emphasis on reaching out to constituents from areas affected by SALW proliferation.
- Support and engage in regional and international parliamentary efforts to exchange, analyse and formulate cross-regional SALW policies.
- Engage in dialogue with CSOs on possible policies to prevent and address SALW proliferation and misuse, including awareness-raising initiatives.
- Promote inclusion of parliamentarians in the international negotiations/conferences related to international SALW control instruments, in order to facilitate the bridging of knowledge and incorporation of international instruments from the international to the regional and national realm.

c) Inhumane weapons: Landmines, cluster munitions and explosive weapons in populated areas

Parliamentarians can:

- Ensure the ratification of the landmines and cluster munitions conventions by their parliament/government;
- Ensure that implementation measures for the landmines and cluster munitions conventions include prohibition of investments in the cluster munitions and landmines industries;
- Support the adoption of an international commitment (declaration or agreement) on preventing the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Chapter 3: Disarmament for future generations: fully autonomous weapons and military uses of cyberspace

Parliamentarians can:

- Support measures to ensure that any new weapons system or method of warfare conform to international humanitarian law and other laws of warfare, as well as the principle of human responsibility for matters regarding life and death, and to prohibit the development of weapons systems and methods of warfare which cannot meet these criteria;
- Support negotiations for a treaty prohibiting fully autonomous weapons systems;
- Ensure the full application of international humanitarian law to military uses of cyberspace.

Chapter 4: Strengthening partnerships

Parliamentarians can:

- Engage with key constituencies including mayors and other legislators, women, youth, religious leaders, business leaders, industry experts, academics and other civil society representatives, when undertaking disarmament events and actions;
- Advance disarmament in regional parliaments and inter-parliamentary organisations;
- Engage in UN disarmament processes as part of national delegations or parliamentary delegations;
- Support the national implementation of disarmament and non-proliferation education;
- Organise parliamentary events or motions to observe UN Days related to disarmament.

Chapter 5: Disarmament, climate protection and sustainable development

Parliamentarians can:

- Ensure that disarmament issues and objectives are included in national and international forums on addressing climate change and achieving the sustainable development goals;
- Require reviews of the military carbon footprint from their defence ministries, along with plans to reduce carbon emissions;
- Consider ways to reduce defence budgets in order to liberate resources for climate protection and sustainable development;
- Develop policies or guidelines for sovereign wealth funds and other financial institutions managing public funds which would prioritise divestment from controversial weapons (nuclear, landmines, cluster munitions...) and would prioritise impact investment to support climate protection and sustainable development;
- Support economic conversion programmes to protect jobs and social cohesion when cuts are made to defence spending or military forces.

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

Parliamentarians can:

- Support the UN Secretary-General's initiative for a global ceasefire;
- Support budgetary allocations to COVID-19 containment and management, and to economic recovery, and to consider reducing military budgets in order to liberate resources required to address the pandemic;
- Support a moratorium on military weapons production and supply during the pandemic;
- Support measures to strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention (including at the next Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference) in order to ensure prevention of virus outbreaks from military sources, and to enable more effective cooperation in addressing future pandemics regardless of whether they originated from military or civilian sources.

II. List of policies and parliamentary actions

Chapter 1: Disarmament to save humanity

a) Nuclear weapons

Nuclear risk reduction

- OSCE PA declaration on détente, diplomacy and no-first-use
- USA: No-first-use resolutions in federal and state legislatures
- USA: Senate hearing on the authority to launch a nuclear war
- Russia/USA: Cooperative Threat Reduction Program

Non-proliferation and arms control

- United Kingdom: Lords Inquiry on Rising nuclear risks, disarmament and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, 2019
- European Parliament Resolution on the 2020 NPT Review Conference
- US/Russia dialogue: Russian parliamentary group for relations with the US Congress
- USA: Hastening Arms Limitation Talks (HALT) Act 2020

Nuclear tests

- The PTBT Amendment Conference – a novel approach to achieve the CTBT
- French National Assembly: Advancing CTBT Entry into Force
- Indonesia: Parliamentary visits to CTBTO
- USA: Cutting the funding for nuclear testing – the PLANET Act
- USA: Nuclear testing compensation legislation
- USA: Environmental monitoring and the Runit Island nuclear waste dome

National and regional prohibitions:

- New Zealand: Nuclear Free Zone Act 1987
- Treaty of Tlatelolco: Latin America and the Caribbean NWFZ
- Parliamentary statement supporting a Middle East WMD-free zone
- Bahrain: IPU Parliamentary Group support for a Middle East Zone
- Parliamentary statement on denuclearization of North-East Asia

Elimination and a nuclear weapons convention

- Parliamentary resolutions supporting the NPT and a Nuclear Weapons Convention
- IPU resolution on nuclear disarmament and the role of parliaments

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

- IPU/ICAN letter to parliaments
- Bangladesh: TPNW legislation

b) Chemical and biological weapons

- Nepal, Samoa, Central African Republic and Tanzania: Ratification of the BWC
- UK: Chemical Weapons Act 1996 and destruction of stockpiles
- European parliament resolution on the BTWC, 2006
- PGA Campaign: Biological Weapons Convention & UN Security Council Resolution 1540
- India: Chemical Weapons Act 2000: regional confidence building
- Chile: Parliament action on Biological and Chemical Weapons

Policies and parliamentary actions**c) Outer space**

- European parliament: Space and Security resolution 2008
- New Zealand: Outer Space & High-altitude Activities Act 2017, Space launch guidelines 2019
- USA: Space Preservation Act of 2001
- USA: Senate draft resolution on peaceful uses of Space, 2019

Chapter 2: Disarmament that saves lives**a) Conventional weapons and the arms trade**

- Global Parliamentary Declaration on the Arms Trade Treaty
- Costa Rica: Abolition of armed forces
- Guinea Bissau and Maldives: Ratification of the ATT
- USA: Leahy Laws
- USA: Congress actions on arms sales and human rights violations
- UK parliamentary inquiry on arms exports, implementing the Arms Trade Treaty, 2018

b) Small arms and light weapons

- Argentina: National Programme for the Voluntary Surrender of Firearms, 2006
- Brazil: Statute of Disarmament, Law No. 10,826/03, 2003
- PARLATINO: Regional cooperation and Model Law 2008
- West Africa: ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other related Materials, 2006
- Australia: National Firearms Agreement and associated legislation, 1996
- Burkina Faso: Addressing armed violence and illicit arms trafficking

c) Inhumane weapons: landmines, cluster munitions and explosive weapons in populated areas**Cluster Munitions**

- France: Law on the Elimination of Cluster Munitions, 2010
- Netherlands: Regulations on divestment from the cluster munitions industry
- Belgium: Laws banning inhumane weapons and related investments
- European Parliament: Resolution, 2007
- USA: Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act, 2017

Landmines

- Bosnia-Herzegovina: Demining Law 2002 (amended 2017)
- Ireland: Cluster Munitions And Anti-Personnel Mines Act (2008)
- USA: Joint Congressional letter on Landmines, May 2020

Explosive weapons in populated areas

- International Network on Explosive Weapons parliamentary appeal

Chapter 3: Disarmament for future generations

- IPU Resolution on Cyber-warfare and global security, 2015
- European parliament: Resolution on autonomous weapons systems, September 2018
- Parliamentary declaration supporting a treaty prohibiting fully autonomous weapons
- OSCE Parliamentary Assembly resolution on cyber-attacks and cyber-security, 2013
- European Cyber Diplomacy Toolbox

Chapter 4: Strengthening partnerships

Mayors

- European appeal of mayors and parliamentarians, 2019

Women

- Bougainville peace and arms disposal agreement, 2001
- Women legislators appeals for peace and disarmament
- IPU policy on gender representation

Religious communities

- Joint events with religious leaders, 2015-2017

Youth

- IPU Youth Forum and disarmament

Disarmament Education

- New Zealand: Disarmament education and the United Nations
- Bahrain: Scientific Research Award on curbing WMD proliferation

Parliamentary events to commemorate UN Days

- International day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons
- International day against nuclear tests
- UN Disarmament Week

UN, treaty bodies and parliamentary organisations

- Parliamentary participation in UN and treaty-body meetings
- IPU Annual UN Hearings
- United Nations Associations and UNFOLD ZERO

Chapter 5: Disarmament, climate protection and sustainable development

- USA: Economic conversion, US Congress and military base closures
- UK Parliament: Defence diversification and nuclear disarmament
- New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland: Nuclear weapons divestment
- USA: Smarter Approach to Nuclear Expenditure (SANE) Act, 2019
- IPU: Launch of Move the Nuclear Weapons Money

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

Addressing COVID-19, public health, weapons and the military

- US Senate letter to invoke Defense Production Act of 1950
- Thailand: Cutting military budget to liberate resources to address COVID-19 pandemic
- Women's appeal for human security, public health, peace & sustainable development,
- Global weapons freeze campaign
- United States: Defense Spending Reduction Caucus

Support for UN initiative for a global ceasefire

- IPU joint statement
- Bahrain: Parliamentary Group statement
- Parliamentary Forum Small Arms and Light Weapons statement

III. 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.

IV. 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
- 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), 1968
- 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

V. IPU resolutions relating to disarmament

- [Cyber warfare: A serious threat to peace and global security](#), adopted at the 132nd IPU Assembly, Hanoi, March-April 2015
- [Toward a Nuclear Weapon Free World: The Contribution of Parliaments](#), adopted at the 130th IPU Assembly, Geneva, March 2014
- [The role of parliaments in supervising the destruction of chemical weapons and the ban on their use](#), adopted at the 129th IPU Assembly, Geneva, October 2013
- [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 122nd IPU Assembly, Bangkok, March-April 2010
- [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 120th IPU Assembly, Addis Ababa, April 2009
- [The role of parliaments in strengthening the control of trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition](#), adopted at 114th IPU Assembly, Nairobi, May 2006

VI. Selected parliamentary resources on disarmament and non-proliferation

- [Parliamentary Action Plan for a Nuclear Weapons Free World](#), developed by PNND in cooperation with IPU, 2017.
- [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 Oversight of the Security Sector: Principles, Mechanisms and Practices](#), IPU and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2003.
- [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

- **January 24:** Anniversary of UN General Assembly Resolution 1 (1). A consensus resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons and other WMD.
- **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)
- **September 21:** International Day for Peace
- **September 26:** International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons
- **October 24-30:** UN Disarmament Week

OTHER KEY DATES

- **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)
- **Mid-April:** Global days of action on military spending
- **May 24:** International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament
- **Second week of June:** Global Week of Action on Gun Violence
- **July 9:** International Gun Destruction Day
- **August 6:** Anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima
- **August 9:** Anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki
- **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)

ABOUT THE PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Geneva Centre for Security Policy

The Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) is an international foundation established in 1995, with now 53 member states, which strives to effectively serve the current and the next generations of policy and decision-makers in governments, international organizations, non-profit organizations, as well as in the private sector. Anchored in innovative new teaching methods centred on bridging experience and expertise, the GCSP way endeavours to offer a unique global platform of knowledge and practice of international security affairs. It is located in the “Maison de la paix” in the middle of International Geneva.

www.gcsp.ch

Inter-Parliamentary Union

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) is the global organization of national parliaments. It was founded 130 years ago as the first multilateral political organization in the world, encouraging cooperation and dialogue between all nations. Today, the IPU comprises 179 national Member Parliaments and 13 regional parliamentary bodies. It promotes democracy and helps parliaments become stronger, younger, gender-balanced and more diverse. It also defends the human rights of parliamentarians through a dedicated committee made up of MPs from around the world. Twice a year, the IPU convenes over 1,500 parliamentary delegates and partners in a world assembly, bringing a parliamentary dimension to global governance, including the work of the United Nations and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

www.ipu.org

Parliamentarians for Global Action

Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA), which was established in 1978, is a non-partisan international network of approximately 1,300 legislators in over 140 elected parliaments around the globe, with aims to promote peace, democracy, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality and population issues. PGA informs, convenes, and mobilizes parliamentarians to realize these goals.

www.pgaction.org

Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament

Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) is a global, non-partisan network of over 600 legislators working to reduce nuclear dangers, prevent nuclear weapons proliferation and advance the peace and security of a nuclear-weapon-free world. PNND includes members from nuclear-armed, allied and non-nuclear states, and facilitates dialogue between these legislators in order to address and transcend the security issues giving rise to nuclear deterrence policies. PNND is also active in highlighting the links between nuclear disarmament, peace, climate protection and sustainable development.

www.pnnd.org

Parliamentary Forum for Small Arms and Light Weapons

The Parliamentary Forum on Small Arms and Light Weapons (PFSALW) is a membership-based organisation gathering parliamentarians globally across party-political lines, specifically related to the reduction and prevention of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW)-related violence. It is an organisation constituted by parliamentarians, for parliamentarians globally, incorporating the gender equality perspective as one of its strategic priorities. The Theory of Change of PFSALW is to contribute to the achievement of more peaceful and sustainably developed societies by enhancing parliamentary action in the implementation and universalisation of international frameworks relevant to the prevention and reduction of SALW-related violence through capacity-building, policy-shaping and awareness-raising.

www.parliamentaryforum.org

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) was established in 1982 (originally as the Department for Disarmament Affairs) in order to provide institutional support for multilateral efforts aimed at achieving the goal of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. The mandate for the programme is derived from the priorities established in relevant General Assembly resolutions and decisions in the field of disarmament. Priorities include weapons of mass destruction, humanitarian impact of major conventional weapons and emerging weapon technologies, such as autonomous weapons.

The participation of UNODA in this handbook indicates support for the important role of parliamentarians in implementing disarmament goals, but does not imply endorsement of any specific policy, parliamentary action or recommendation included in the handbook.

www.un.org/disarmament

World Future Council

The World Future Council (WFC) consists of a group of 50 councillors who are eminent global change-makers, supported by a team of program officers. The councillors come from governments, parliaments, civil society, academia, the arts and business who have already successfully created change. They identify effective policies to address global issues, and advance programs to replicate and spread such policies. Policy areas include Climate & Energy; Peace & Disarmament; Food, Land & Livelihoods; Oceans; and Rights of Children and Youth.

www.worldfuturecouncil.org

ASSURING OUR COMMON FUTURE

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

This handbook focuses on parliamentary action to implement the disarmament agenda put forward by UN Secretary-General António Guterres in his 2018 report entitled *Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*. This agenda includes a set of goals and practical measures across the entire range of disarmament issues, including weapons of mass destruction, outer space, conventional weapons and future weapon technologies. The handbook provides additional background to these disarmament issues, makes connections between disarmament and sustainable development including climate protection, provides examples of effective policies and parliamentary action, and offers recommendations for further parliamentary action. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the handbook also includes a focus on disarmament and pandemics.

This handbook is also available
in a web version at:

www.DisarmamentHandbook.org