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PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR
NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION
AND DISARMAMENT

Report on Good Nuclear Disarmament Practice Workshop IPU Headquarters (Geneva) 17 October 2014

On 17 October 2014, the World Future Council (WFC), the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), organized a one-day international Workshop for parliamentarians on Good Nuclear Disarmament Practice at IPU Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

In recent years, these three organizations have collaborated successfully to inform and engage parliaments and their members on nuclear disarmament. This included the adoption in [2009](#) and [2014](#) of landmark IPU resolutions on the role of parliaments in advancing nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, the production of a unique [Handbook for Parliamentarians](#) and organizing the [2013 Future Policy Award](#) around the theme of sustainable disarmament.



The Workshop, which was held following the conclusion of the [131st IPU Assembly](#), brought together parliamentarians from over a dozen countries (from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East) to examine examples of good parliamentary practice on nuclear weapons prohibition and financing, phasing out the reliance on nuclear deterrence and supporting multilateral nuclear disarmament initiatives. Drawing on a range of good nuclear disarmament practices, the Workshop also supported the implementation of the IPU resolution [Towards a nuclear weapons-free world: The contribution of parliaments](#), adopted in March 2014 at the 130th IPU Assembly. The Workshop offered the parliamentarians in attendance an opportunity to share good practices from their parliaments, as well as to examine practices from other parliaments that might be appropriate to replicate.



The Workshop was opened by the IPU Secretary General, Mr. M. Chungong and the incoming IPU President, Mr. S. Chowdhury. The latter, who had been elected IPU President the previous day, said that he was honoured to deal with nuclear disarmament as the first item on his agenda as the new IPU President. Mr. Chowdhury—who in 2011 introduced a [bill](#) in the Bangladesh

Parliament aimed at establishing the country as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone—also noted the importance of implementing the IPU resolution on nuclear disarmament and vowed to keep the issue on the IPU agenda.



Ms. T. Cronberg, MEP, a Co-President of PNND, highlighted the critical role of parliamentarians in advancing nuclear disarmament. As an example of parliamentary action, she referred to the [Written Declaration](#) in support of Global Zero's worldwide nuclear disarmament plan that 389 Members of the European Parliament (over half the parliament) had signed in September 2012. She noted the value of PNND in facilitating constructive

discussion and providing tools for parliamentarians to take action on those issues.

Mr. R. van Riet, Coordinator of the Disarmament Programme at the WFC, informed the participants of the WFC's focus on highlighting best policies in a range of areas, including disarmament. He further noted that the WFC's annual Future Policy Award—which in 2013 had been organized around the theme of disarmament—was not meant to be a goal in itself, but rather a tool to disseminate best practice and policies. He added that the focus on good nuclear disarmament practice could also assist legislators in implementing the relevant IPU resolutions.

The Workshop's first panel considered the feasibility, form and function of existing examples of nuclear prohibition legislation.

Ambassador E. Jargalsaikhan of the Mongolian NGO Blue Banner, informed the participants of the background and implementation of the 2000 [Law of Mongolia on its nuclear-weapon-free status](#). He emphasized how the country's nuclear-free policy had been an innovative approach to achieving neutrality and security following the end of the Cold War. The law included a specific request for acceptance by the nuclear powers and assurances from them not to threaten or use nuclear weapons against Mongolia. As Mongolia was sandwiched between two nuclear powers, recognition of the policy by the nuclear weapon States was crucial to its effectiveness. He noted that Mongolia's law could be a policy option for some of the nearly 40 States that were not part of the existing regional Nuclear Weapon-Free Zones and were unlikely to be able to join one given their geostrategic positions, i.e. adjacent to nuclear-weapon-States or States under extended nuclear deterrence relationships.



Ambassador T. Hajnoczi, Austria's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office at Geneva, spoke about how an understanding of the transboundary effects of radioactive fallout from the Chernobyl accident had led to strong sentiment against nuclear weapons and nuclear

energy in Austria. In 1999, that had been enshrined in the [Constitutional Law in favour of a Nuclear-Free Austria](#). He highlighted Section 4 of the law, which provided that damages caused by a nuclear accident in Austria should be compensated appropriately, and that the right to compensation could be enforced against foreign natural and legal persons who had caused the damage. He also informed the participants of the major conference that Austria was organizing on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in Vienna on 8 and 9 December 2014, at which over 150 country delegations were expected to attend.

Mr. A. Ware, Global Coordinator of PNND, spoke about New Zealand's 1987 [Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act](#). He noted that the law had come about as a result of heightened awareness of the horrific consequences of nuclear testing and a civil society campaign that had worked with leading parliamentarians. He explained how adoption of the law had meant a rejection of nuclear deterrence, which New Zealand had previously embraced as part of an extended nuclear deterrence relationship with the United States. He highlighted key features of the law, including its application to territorial waters (ending visits of nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered warships), a prohibition on aiding and abetting others (which precluded the New Zealand military from participating in exercises or operations with foreign powers if nuclear weapons were involved), and the establishment of a Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control and a Public Advisory Committee to advise the government on implementation of the law. He noted that the law and accompanying policy change had enhanced New Zealand's international standing considerably, as evidenced by increased trade and tourism and by its successful participation in international bodies. He cited the election of New Zealand to the UN Security Council two days previously, in the first round of voting, as a recent example of such international recognition.

In an intervention from the floor, *Prof. A.-M. de Zayas, UN Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order*, emphasized that the goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons was crucial to his mandate. He referred to his [Third Report to the Human Rights Council](#), which included recommendations to parliamentarians on, among other issues, exercising their oversight function in relation to excessive military spending. He noted the role of the International Court of Justice and informed the participants of the [cases filed by the Marshall Islands](#) at the Court against the nine nuclear powers for violating their legal obligation to disarm.



The second panel examined the state of nuclear budgets and the policy of divestment as a way to bring public expenditures in conformity with international obligations.



Mr. R. van Riet noted how austerity-inspired budget cuts had meant that expenditures on the maintenance and development of nuclear weapons had come under increased scrutiny in recent years and that budgetary concerns had contributed to the wider debate on

whether these weapons met the security needs of the 21st century. He added that the nuclear weapon States were expected to spend over [US\\$ 1 trillion over the next decade](#) (2012-2022). He further highlighted some examples of how legislators in the United States had been able to halt the development of new types of nuclear weapons and speed up their removal through invoking their budgetary powers. He lastly discussed Norway's decision to adopt [Ethical Guidelines](#) to ensure its Government Pension Fund would not invest anymore in companies involved in grossly unethical (and possibly illegal) practices, including the development and production of key components for nuclear weapons.



Ms. B. Gysi, Member of the Swiss Federal Assembly, informed the participants of the 2013 review of the [Swiss Federal Act on War Material](#), which prohibited, inter alia, the financing of nuclear weapon producers. Among the weapons prohibited by the Act, which also covered chemical and biological weapons, cluster bombs and landmines, only nuclear weapons were not explicitly outlawed by international treaties to which Switzerland was a Party. She emphasized the importance

of such a law in a country with an extensive banking sector. She highlighted Article 8 of the Law, which prohibited indirect financing as being particularly innovative but also noted the difficulties of proving such indirect financing. She concluded by underscoring the importance of consulting civil society in such policy-initiatives and praised the activities of the Swiss NGO Business and Human Rights Conform (BHRC) in building public support for that policy.

The third panel considered pathways towards phasing out reliance on nuclear deterrence in favour of cooperative security.

Mr. M. Finaud, Geneva Centre for Security Policy, highlighted the dangers of ongoing nuclear weapon deployment and observed that the pace of nuclear weapons reductions was slowing. He stated that nuclear weapons possession was underpinned by two motives: fear and power and proposed four steps to replace nuclear deterrence doctrines by cooperative security mechanisms: (1) dissociate permanent membership of the UN Security Council from possession of nuclear weapons; (2) vigorously address the regional conflicts that fuelled proliferation; (3) promote synergies between regional and global disarmament; and (4) all nuclear-weapon States should adopt new security doctrines. He further identified two parallel tracks that could be pursued to achieve a world without nuclear weapons: (1) a convention banning and eliminating nuclear weapons; and (2) a revival of the concept of general and complete disarmament.

Ms. U. Zapf, former Member of the German Bundestag and PNND Adviser on Inter-Parliamentary Organizations, welcomed the 2014 IPU resolution as a tool to educate parliamentarians and exert influence over governments. She also emphasized the role parliamentarians could play in scrutinizing the security doctrines of their governments



and examining alternative cooperative security mechanisms. She referred to her own experience in chairing the Bundestag Subcommittee on Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, which had reviewed NATO nuclear policy, including Germany's role in that process. She identified a role for parliaments to build confidence and trust between nations and pointed to regional parliamentary assemblies, such as the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Parliamentary Assembly and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Parliamentary Assembly, as bodies where the methods and modalities of cooperative security could be advanced.

Mr. J. César Mercado, Counsellor at the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations, spoke on behalf of the Organization for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) about the influence of the 1967 Treaty of Tlatelolco, which had established the first Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) in a populated area. He highlighted the precedent-setting nature of the Treaty, which had been negotiated during a time of political turbulence in Latin America,



with several countries outside the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), at least two of which had the potential to develop nuclear weapons programmes. The success of the Tlatelolco Treaty in turning that situation around underscored the potential of establishing additional NWFZs as a way to defuse regional tensions, stave off nuclear proliferation and achieve common security.

The final panel considered prospects for implementing the 2014 IPU resolution *Towards a nuclear weapon-free world: The contribution of parliaments*.



Ms. L.A. Rojas Hernández, Member of the Mexican Senate, remarked how heightened awareness of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons—including through the related conferences in Oslo, Norway, in 2013 and in Nayarit, Mexico, in 2014—had placed the debate on nuclear disarmament firmly in the context of human security, and that parliamentarians had a responsibility to keep the goal of a world free of nuclear

weapons high on the political and public agenda. In that context, she welcomed the 2014 IPU resolution as an important tool for parliamentarians to further advance the nuclear disarmament agenda. She argued that parliamentarians needed to place nuclear disarmament on par with climate change as an issue of concern to all humankind.

Mr. A. Ware shared examples of parliamentary action to advance four key elements of the resolution. On the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, parliamentarians in various countries - including the United Kingdom, the United States and France - had asked their governments questions, organized events hearing evidence from experts and nuclear test

victims and/or submitted motions on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament in the run-up to the international conferences in Oslo and Nayarit. In addition, PNND, for example, had brought victims of nuclear testing in Kazakhstan to its Annual Assembly in Washington, D.C. earlier in 2014. With regard to pursuing a multilateral convention banning nuclear weapons or a package of agreements — another key element of the IPU resolution— he noted that parliamentarians had issued joint statements, raised questions in their



parliaments and attended international meetings on how such a convention or framework could be achieved and what it would entail. He gave evidence of how parliamentarians had worked to challenge the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines. Lastly, he provided examples of how parliamentarians had commemorated the inaugural International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September 2014 through engaging in the

recently established online platform [UNfold ZERO](#) and adopting resolutions in support of the Day, as had been done in Costa Rica and Cuba.

Ms. P. Torsney, Head of the Office of the Permanent Observer of the IPU to the United Nations and a former Canadian parliamentarian, congratulated PNND and the MPs present for using the network to help MPs advocate within their own parliaments and in their regions and noted that having a specific Day (September 26) offered the focused opportunity to engage with civil society locally and nationally, and with colleagues interested in advancing those issues. She referred to the effective collaboration at IPU assemblies and bilateral meetings, where Canadian MPs had facilitated ongoing dialogue and ratification of the Ottawa Treaty against anti-personnel landmines several years previously.

The panel presentations were followed by rich, open and constructive question-and-answer sessions with the participants. Discussions covered a range of issues, including the practicalities of implementing nuclear prohibition legislation, ways of building public support for nuclear divestment policies, the role of parliamentarians in scrutinizing nuclear budgets, achieving greater transparency in nuclear expenditures and the importance of establishing a Weapons of Mass Destruction-free Zone in the Middle East.



The present concise report does not do justice to the level of detail of the presentations and the discussions. For more information on any of the policies or initiatives, please contact Mr. Rob van Riet at: rob.vanriet@worldfuturecouncil.