



CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT ON CALLING FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF PREPARATIONS FOR THE UN'S FOURTH SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT

UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security

16th October 2024

Delivered by Rafi Chowdhury, International Peace Bureau

Chairperson, distinguished delegates,

I present this statement on behalf of 175 civil society representatives and a coalition of organisations from around the world. We urge all member states to activate the UN General Assembly mechanism of Special Sessions on Disarmament without further procrastination, as per the recommendations of the UN Secretary-General António Guterres in Action 26(a) of the *Pact for the Future*.

It has been 46 years since the United Nation's First Special Session on Disarmament was held in 1978. This established the present architecture of the multilateral disarmament machinery, enumerating both the priority objectives for arms control and disarmament and the key institutions to realize them, namely the Commission on Disarmament in New York and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Two other special sessions followed in 1982 and 1988, without leading to any major changes to the architecture agreed in 1978.

While this machinery was effective in its early years, producing significant treaties such as the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993 and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996, the system has since stagnated. The Conference on Disarmament has been unable to agree upon and implement a programme of work on its agenda items for almost 30 years. The continued paralysis of this body highlights the growing consensus that the framework established in 1978 is no longer fit for purpose and requires comprehensive review and reform.

UN member states have recognized the desirability of holding the Fourth Special Session on Disarmament for years. This is reflected in the annual resolutions calling for its convening, including the most recent, A/RES/78/24, adopted without a vote on 4 December 2023. This resolution reaffirmed the belief that a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament can set the course for future actions on disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation, and related security issues.

Despite this widespread support, tangible action to bring about a Special Session on Disarmament has been elusive. For almost 30 years, the General Assembly has been locked in an endless cycle of consultations on the "next steps," without actually taking any. Typically, a Preparatory Committee would be established to address the practical issues of organizing a special session. However, this decision has been deferred to the



General Assembly, resulting in perpetual consultations, with no concrete steps forward.

This inaction comes at a time of intensifying global tensions and the unravelling of key arms control frameworks. The prolonged neglect of this crucial aspect of the UN's peace and security mandate is untenable. In his 'New Agenda for Peace,' Secretary-General Guterres has acknowledged the need to reform the disarmament machinery and has called for an intergovernmental process to consider the timing, role, and preparations for a special session on disarmament.

We call upon this body to adopt a resolution to establish a Preparatory Committee by 2025 that will oversee the arrangements for convening a Fourth Special Session on Disarmament as the only viable and fully representative mechanism of the UN to hold discussions about and enable reform of the disarmament machinery, in order to effectively advance a comprehensive disarmament agenda.

The time for action is long overdue. The world cannot afford further delay on this vital issue.

Thank you.

Coalition of Organisations

Ágora Mexico

Canadian Network to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

Canadian Pugwash Group

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)

Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

International Peace Bureau (IPB)

IPHRD-Africa

Jeunesse pour la Paix et le Développement du Monde Rural

Justice for All

Moruroa e Tātou

NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace, and Security

Oxfam

Pax Christi England and Wales

Re-Imagining New Communities



SCRAP Weapons

Thrive Together Community Based Organization

Uzalendo Afrika Initiative

Women Volunteers for Peace (WOVOP)

Civil Society Representatives

Abubakar Jimoh

Advocacy and Communications Specialist, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)/Transparency International in Nigeria (TI-Nigeria)

Adeela Ahmed

Lecturer, Bzu Multan Pakistan

Al Mart

CEO, Springs Alive

Alex Elliott

S.C.N.D & Emerging Voices Network, BASIC

Alex Neve

Chair, Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention

Ambassador (ret.) Alfredo Labbe

Vice-President, International Humanitarian Fact Finding Commission

Alireza Mamdouhi

PhD Student, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

Alison Williams

Membership Secretary and Editor, Wimbledon Disarmament Coalition

Ana-Yancy Espinoza

Academic Director, Arias Foundation for Peace

Andrew Jackson

Chief Executive, Pax Christi England and Wales

Angela Siby

Student, SOAS University of London



Angie Zelter
Founder, XR Peace

Ann Smith
Co-Founder & Director, Green Tent Circle

Anna Ikeda
Representative to the UN, Soka Gakkai International

Anne Osamba
Director, Uzalendo Afrika Initiative

Anthony Rudolf
Editor, Menard Press (nuclear publications)

Antony John Papard
Member, CND

Arnd Jurgensen
Chair, Nuclear Weapons Working Group, Science for Peace

Ayman Okeil
Chairman, MAAT Foundation for Peace

Bailey Hanson
UN Youth Representative, Ágora

Becky Alexis-Martin
Lecturer in Peace Studies, University of Bradford

Bev DeLong
Former Chair, Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention
Director, Canadian Pugwash Group

Brenda Grant
Treasurer, Merton PSC

Brian D'Agostino
Editor, Disarmament Times

Brian Jason Delos Santos
Lead Convener, Philippine Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security



Brian Quail
Exec, SCND

Bruce Knotts
President, Citizens for Global Solutions

Carmen Capriles
General Coordinator, Reacción Climática- Bolivia

Catherine Richards
Professor Emerita, University of Ottawa

Cesar Jaramillo
Executive Director, Project Ploughshares
Chair, Canadian Pugwash Group

Chantal Bahati Assumani
Trésorerie , Jeunesse pour la Paix et le Développement du Monde Rural

Christopher Bolte

Chuti Michael Ayuen Johnson
Chairperson, Specialised Committee on Defence, South Sudan Transitional National
Legislative Assembly

Clara Coencas
Graduate, University of Westminster

Clifford Feightner
Founder, FLA Author Publishing LLC

Daniel Ajudeonu
Member of Leadership Team, Youth Pugwash

Daniel Peter
Director, Release Peace

Dan Plesch
Director, SCRAP Weapons
Professor of Diplomacy and Strategy, SOAS University of London

David Hoadley



David Overton
Co-chair, Social Action Council, First UU Church of Austin, Texas

David Swanson
Executive Director, World BEYOND War

David Webb
Chair, Yorkshire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Denia Dimsdale
Postgraduate Student, SOAS University of London

Dhilan Patel
Student, Reading University

Elisa Shafiqah binti Shahrilnizam
Head Advisor, Malaysian Youth Diplomacy

Elisabeth Rachlew
Prof.em., KTH

Elizabeth Waterston
Member, Medact

Ellen R. Judd
Distinguished Professor Emerita, University of Manitoba
Director, Canadian Pugwash Group

Eloisa Romani
Project Coordinator, SCRAP Weapons

Els Torreele
Independent researcher and adviser

Elsa Marie DSilva
Founder, Red Dot Foundation

Emily Molinari
Deputy Executive Director, IPB

Emmanuelle Bellée
Conseil départemental de la Manche



Enkhsaikhan Jargalsaikhan
Chairman, Blue Banner

Ephrem Biragi Kasole
Coordinateur National, Jeunesse pour la Paix et le Développement du Monde Rural

Erika Simpson
Associate Professor of International Politics, The University of Western Ontario
Director, Canadian Pugwash Group

Ernie Regehr
Senior Fellow, The Simons Foundation Canada

Felipe Ribeiro
Minister, UU@UN

Francesco Lenci
Former Research Director, National Research Council (CNR)
Former Biophysics Institute Director, CNR
Member, Italian Union of Scientists for Disarmament (USPID)
Member, Pugwash Council

Francis Flynn

Frank N. von Hippel
Professor of Public and International Affairs emeritus
Program on Science and Global Security, Princeton University

Frederic Dahlmann
VP, Ujamaa

Fredrik S. Heffermehl
Author and Lawyer

Gill Newton
President of Methodist Conference, Methodist Church

Gita Dharampal
Honorary Dean of Research, Prof. (rtd.), Gandhi Research Foundation

Grace Orao
Executive Director, Women Volunteers for Peace (WOVOP)



Grant Donohue
Committee Member, People for Nuclear Disarmament, NSW – Australia

Gregory Berglund
Author & Professor, Indian Institute of Ecology and Environment: New Delhi

Greta Vipond
UNA-Bexhill & Hastings

Guy Quinlan
Chairperson, All Souls Nuclear Disarmament Task Force

Haleema Saadia
Research Fellow, NUST/ The ROADS Initiative

Helen McAuley
Member, Wimbledon Disarmament Coalition

Helen McLaughlin
Sister, Society of the Sacred Heart

Hussein Mohamed
Sr. Scientist, NYU

Iain Overton
Executive Director, AOAV

Ida Golberg
Activist, Nei Til Atomvapen/ Youth for TPNW

Isatou Sarr
MRCG at LSHTM

Ivan Knez
Mayor, City of Biograd Na Moru

Jack Ainsworth
Project Assistant, SCRAP Weapons

Jack Cinamon
Researcher, Shadow World Investigations



James Luk
Project Assistant, SCRAP Weapons

Janet Headley
Member, CND

Jasminka Bajlo
Representative of Executive City Biograd Na Moru, Croatia & Mayors for Peace

Jean Yves Ndzana Ndzana
PhD candidate, Leiden University

Jennifer Simons
Founder and President, The Simons Foundation, Canada

Jenny Meyer

Jessica West
Senior Researcher, Project Ploughshares

John Carlson
Former Director General, Australian Safeguards and Non-proliferation Office

John Cooper
Director, Fellowship of Reconciliation (England and Scotland)

John Guilfoyle
President, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Canada

John Korodi
Project Assistant, SCRAP Weapons

John Oubridge
Member, UNA

Dr. John Pawlikowski
Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics, Catholic Theological Union

John T
President, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Canada



Joon Chun Park
President, World Methodist Council

Jorge Valderrabano
Advocacy Officer, Agora

Juan Gomez
Chilean Coordinator, Mundo sin guerras y sin violencia

Julie Steinbach
Outreach Co-Chair, International Convocation of UU Women (ICUW)

Kamilia Amdouni
Peace & Security Researcher and Consultant

Karen Kortsch
International Convocation of Unitarian Universalist Women USA Global

Katie Fallon
Advocacy Manager, Campaign Against Arms

Kazumi Matsui
President, Mayors for Peace & Mayor of Hiroshima

Kenneth Christiansen

Kennette Benedict
Senior Advisor, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

Kerry Scarlett
Vice President, Methodist Church in Britain

Rev. Dr. Kevin Snyman
Commitment for Life, United Reformed Church

Larissa Silva
Student, UERJ

Laura Lodenius
Director, Peace Union of Finland



Lucie Miller
Member, The Iona Community

Manjola Perja
President, ALVA -Albanian Values

Manuel Galileo
Analyst, SCRAP Weapons

Marc Finaud
Vice President, Initiatives pour le désarmement nucléaire (IDN), France

Marian Pallister
Chair, Pax Christi Scotland

Marian Wingrove
Branch Chairperson, Labour Party

Marianne Hanson
Associate Professor, University of Queensland

Martin Butcher
Policy Advisor on Arms, Conflict and IHL, OXFAM

Mary Were
Executive Director, Winam Grassroots

Matthew Evans
Senior Lecturer in Law, Politics and Sociology, University of Sussex

May-May Meijer
Chair, Peace SOS

Megan Rayner
Member, Wimbledon Disarmament Coalition

Professor Michael Manulak
Norman Patterson School of International Affairs
Carleton University, Ottawa

Molly Rosaaen
Youth Representative, Peace Boat US



Monalisa Hazarika
Intern, Forum on the Arms Trade

Muhammad Husnain
Project Assistant, SCRAP Weapons

Natalie Goldring
Visiting Professor of the Practice, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University

Nazifa Haqpal
PhD Candidate, SOAS University of London

Nicholas Hudson
Auxiliary Bishop, Diocese of Westminster

Nishchal Baniya
Chief Executive Officer, Bagmati UNESCO Club

Okumu Kenneth Odong Luka
Committee Clerk, Transitional National Legislative Assembly

Olamide Samuel
Board Member, Nuclear Information Service

Olanrewaju Olomofe
Executive Director, PAD Link

Dr. P. Francesco
Director, QSV

Patricia Bartley
Protective Fellowship Coordinator, Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York

Patricia Kaminski

Paul Meyer
Former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament
Director, Canadian Pugwash Group

Peggy Mason
President, Rideau Institute
Director, Canadian Pugwash Group



Prasad Vaishnav
Director, One Point Five Private Limited

Qijel Mariano
Student, York University School of Global Health

Rahel Beigel
UN Representative, Women's Refugee Commission

Rakesh Sood
Former Ambassador of India to the Conference on Disarmament

Randy Rydell
Senior Political Affairs Officer (ret.), UN Office for Disarmament Affairs

Ray Acheson
Director, Reaching Critical Will, Disarmament Programme, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Reiner Braun
Former Executive Director, International Peace Bureau (IPB)

Robin Collins
Co-Chair, Canadian Network for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons
Director, Canadian Pugwash Group

Rosan Huizenga
Member, WILPF

Ruth Gould
Doctor of Philosophy

Ruth Harvey
Leader, The Iona Community

Sahlim Charles
Executive Director, Re-Imagining New Communities

Sara Al-Sayed
Postdoctoral Research Associate, Program on Science and Global Security, Princeton University



Sean Conner
Executive Director, International Peace Bureau

Sean Howard
Adjunct Professor of Political Science, Cape Breton University, Canada

Sebastian Brock
Emeritus, Oxford University

Serena Newman
Member, CND

Shristi Tamrakar
Political Affairs Intern, UNRCPD

Simon Barrow
Director, Ekklesia

Simone Delhey

Sonya Vandevyvere

Sunita Nahar
MA Student
SOAS, University of London

Susan Nambute
Executive Director, Thrive Together CBO

Susan Wamalwa
Executive Director, IPHRD-AFRICA

Tamatoa Tepuhiarii
Prospective PhD Student, The Australian National University

Tariq Rauf
Former Head of Verification and Security Policy, IAEA
Vice Chair, Canadian Pugwash Group

Tatsujiro Suzuki
Professor, Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, Nagasaki University
(RECNA)



Tekla Virag
Volunteer Coordinator, HWPL-IPYG

Theresa Alessandro
Co-chair, Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Timothy Gorringe
Professor, University of Exeter

Tom Sauer
Professor International Politics, Universiteit Antwerpen, Belgium

Vanessa Canola
Project Assistant, SCRAP Weapons

Dr. Walter Dorn
Professor of Defence Studies, Royal Military College & Canadian Forces College
Director, Canadian Pugwash Group

William Arthur Chapman
Dr, The Iona Community

William Walker
Professor Emeritus of International Relations, University of St Andrew

Wolfgang Petritsch
President, Austrian Institute for International Affairs

YJ Sun

Zahraa Kapasi
Consultant, SCRAP Weapons

Zulfiqar Kapasi