



Parliamentary Forum breakfast for Parliamentarians

**Event co-sponsored by Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and
Disarmament (PNND)**

(as prepared)

Remarks by Mr. KIM Won-soo

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Dr Hedy Fry, MP, Co-Chair of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

The Honourable Doug Roche, representing Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention

Ms Heidi Hulan, Director General, Non-proliferation, Security and Threat Reduction Bureau, Global Affairs Canada

Honourable Members of Parliament

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

It is an honour to be here in the Canadian Parliament and I am grateful to you all for getting up early to come and listen to me.

I bring the best wishes and greetings of the Secretary-General to you all.

My sincere thanks to Canadians for a Nuclear Weapons Convention and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament for arranging today's event. Both organisations are passionate advocates for a nuclear-weapon-free world, and friends of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

I would also like to extend my deep appreciation to the Government of Canada for their hospitality, their historic partnership with the United Nations and their interest in advancing disarmament.

This is the first time I have visited Canada since I assumed my role as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs in June last year.

I am impressed by the deep interest shown in my work as well as by the hospitality extended to my delegation.

It is also the first time that high-level officials, parliamentary leaders, think tanks and civil society leaders from any country – including my own – have reached out to me in such an intensive manner as this time.

I warmly welcome and thank Prime Minister Trudeau for his recent pledge to “step up” and help the United Nations take ever greater strides for the good of all humanity.

I applaud Canada's decision to make the pursuit of international peace and security one of its foreign policy priorities. And I am so pleased that prevention of WMD proliferation and accession to the Arms Trade Treaty are also among Foreign Minister Dion's expressed priorities.

This is testament to Canada's strong and long-standing partnership with the United Nations and also to its historic commitment to the cause of disarmament.

Canada was one of the first states to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) 20 years ago. You have also led efforts for a Fissile Material (Cut-off) Treaty.

Canada is the largest donor to the Joint Investigative Mechanism, which is working now to identify those responsible for the use of chemical weapons in Syria.

It has also generously supported our work to prevent non-state actors from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and to help States in Latin America and elsewhere to implement the Arms Trade Treaty.

In the words of former Canadian Ambassador for Disarmament, Peggy Mason, this reflects an understanding that “disarmament is fundamental to enhancing the security and prosperity of the Canadian people”.

Ladies and Gentlemen

In light of the current international situation, we need more countries to follow Canada’s example, now more than ever.

As stated by the Secretary-General, the world faces twin existential threats: one posed by climate change and the other posed by nuclear weapons.

With the signing last month of the Paris Agreement, it is now time to put a spotlight back on nuclear disarmament, while continuing our efforts to fight climate change.

The need for progress is increasingly urgent. The world is more interconnected and interdependent than ever before. Advances in science, technology and communications are rapidly and profoundly changing lives.

Weapons of mass destruction have made regional tensions more dangerous. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s destabilising nuclear and missile programmes undermine regional and global security. In the Middle East we have seen the frightening re-emergence of the use of chemical weapons.

Malevolent and dangerous non-state actors have risen, capable of striking across the globe. They have reportedly targeted nuclear facilities and actively sought weapons of mass destruction. If we fail to prevent this, the consequences will be devastating.

Rapidly evolving technology, especially in both cyber and outer space, is changing the face of battle. It outpaces regulation and multiplies security challenges.

Each of these issues has impacted the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. But it has made dialogue all the more necessary.

We should remember the critical role disarmament and non-proliferation agreements have played – even at times of heightened tension – in building confidence and in reducing risks. Thus promoting international stability.

We understand that this is what former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau was trying to achieve with his Peace Initiative at the height of the Cold War.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Secretary-General has been steadfastly committed to disarmament throughout his time at the United Nations.

You may recall that it was only three weeks into his term as Secretary-General that he identified disarmament and non-proliferation as one of his overarching priorities.

At the time, the international community was still reeling from the failed 2005 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, or NPT.

That Review Conference revealed deep fissures in the consensus on nuclear disarmament. At the same time, concerns were rising over the DPRK and Iran.

In that increasingly fractured environment, the Secretary-General decided to put nuclear disarmament back at the forefront of the international agenda. He decided to use his personal engagement as a unifying force to reawaken global awareness.

This was the goal of his Five Point Proposal on Nuclear Disarmament and non-proliferation. The proposal – the first such initiative by any Secretary-General – aimed to find common ground on the elimination of nuclear weapons.

In the years that followed, we saw some promising steps forward.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference produced a 64 point action plan. The Nuclear Security Summit was launched to facilitate national and international action to prevent non-state actors from acquiring nuclear material.

We saw progress made on regional nuclear weapon-free zones and on stockpile reductions.

Unfortunately, however, we are still witnessing worrying signs of cracks in the regime.

First, there are no planned new measures to reduce nuclear arsenals beyond 2018. Worryingly, the role of nuclear weapons in national security strategies appears to assume more, not less, primacy.

Second, the world's disarmament negotiation body – the Conference on Disarmament – remains paralyzed, preventing, among other priorities, the negotiation on fissile materials.

Third, as a vivid reminder of this paralysis, this year is the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT. It has still not entered into force.

Non-nuclear-weapon States have become frustrated by what they see as a failure of nuclear-weapon States to live up to legally-binding obligations to achieve nuclear disarmament. They also see modernisation programmes for nuclear weapons as explicitly contrary to the fulfilment of those obligations.

A growing majority of non-nuclear-weapon States have now been imbued with a greater sense of urgency by the humanitarian disarmament movement.

Ladies and gentlemen

There are many pathways for how to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.

When the Secretary-General offered his five-point proposal, there were two contending, yet non-exclusive approaches.

The first was a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention. The second was a framework of separate, mutually-reinforcing instruments, backed by a strong system of verification.

In recent years, other variants have also been floated. An open-ended working group, or OEWG – the second of its kind in the last five years – is currently deliberating on what are essentially four major approaches: The progressive “building blocks” approach; a Nuclear Weapon Convention; a nuclear weapons ban treaty; and a nuclear weapons framework agreement.

As the Secretary-General stated, “What matters most is not which path is taken, but that the chosen path is heading in the right direction – towards the internationally agreed goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons.”

The bottom line should be a shared belief in the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Divisions still remain deep on which path should be taken to achieve that goal.

States must overcome their divisions and build common ground.

Closing the gap between states will require flexibility, creativity, genuine dialogue and, above all, the highest level of leadership.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to conclude by briefly noting how much we at the UN value and respect your role as parliamentarians.

We are well aware of the important power that you have. That is why the Secretary-General and other senior UN officials always meet with parliamentarians whenever we visit the capitals of our Member States.

Through your legislative roles, you uphold the rule of law internationally and nationally to increase transparency and accountability, build trust and enforce verification.

You also set the fiscal priorities for your country and thus can determine how much to invest in the pursuit of peace and disarmament.

The Secretary-General recognized this in his Five Point Plan. Through his February 2010 letter to the Heads of Parliaments, he asked parliamentary leaders to step up their support for peace and disarmament.

In our common journey toward a nuclear-weapon-free world, we count on your leadership. Through your leadership, we believe Canada’s long-standing dedication to disarmament can be taken to an even higher level.

Thank you.