
**Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review
Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the
Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons**

20 April 2012

Original: English

First session

Vienna, 30 April-11 May 2012

**Disarmament and non-proliferation education: practical
steps to implement action 22 of the action plan adopted at
the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on
the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons****Joint working paper submitted by the Non-Proliferation and
Disarmament Initiative**

1. The 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, for the first time in the history of the Treaty, underscored the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education as a useful and effective means to advance the goals of the Treaty in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. Indeed, in action 22 of the action plan adopted at the Conference, all States are encouraged to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124).

2. As expressed in our ministerial statement released in September 2011, the members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative are committed to actively promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, recognizing the particular importance of passing on to younger generations the first-hand experiences of survivors (hibakushas) with regard to the tragic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, so as to ensure that those memories do not fade away. We will actively promote this issue in this 2015 Treaty review process and are committed to the implementation of the above-mentioned recommendations.

3. According to the report of the Secretary-General, the overall objective of disarmament and non-proliferation education is to impart knowledge and skills to individuals to empower them to make their contribution, as national and world citizens, to the achievement of concrete disarmament and non-proliferation measures. Disarmament and non-proliferation education should thus not be intended to indoctrinate in terms of specific ways of thinking, but rather to nurture critical thinking. In this way, people will be empowered to obtain a thorough grasp of the international situation, make sound judgements and take appropriate actions.



4. In implementing action 22, States parties are invited to take into account the following three points:

(a) As achieving a world without nuclear weapons requires long-term continuous efforts, educating young people, especially teenagers, is most crucial. The amassed knowledge and experience of older generations should be passed on to younger generations, including in the educational process, so that they can actively engage in disarmament and non-proliferation issues;

(b) Disarmament and non-proliferation education should be undertaken in a collaborative way. Various actors such as governments, both national and local, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, media, academics and the private sector should closely cooperate with and learn from one another through interaction. Governments can serve as the hub of a network among actors as well as a provider of resources to facilitate interaction;

(c) The 2002 report on disarmament and non-proliferation education recommended using new information and communications technologies, in particular the Internet, and a full range of pedagogical methods including literature, theatre and other artistic activities. It would be more effective to utilize new tools that have become available since the report was published in 2002, including YouTube and social network services such as Twitter and Facebook.

5. The following are examples of good practices by members of the Initiative:

(a) Since 2003, Canada, through the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade International Security Research and Outreach Programme, has collaborated with the Simons Foundation, a Canadian disarmament non-governmental organization, on an annual graduate research awards competition. The programme is aimed at engaging postgraduate students at Canadian universities with respect to particular issues on the international security agenda, particularly nuclear non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. In 2011, the programme was expanded to include a presentation and debate on research papers by award recipients at an event attended by Canadian officials and the Canadian expert community;

(b) In the latter part of 2011, Japan and the Office for Disarmament Affairs co-organized a social media Poetry for Peace Contest, along with a side event involving the testimony of atomic bomb survivors, held on 26 October during Disarmament Week. A Facebook page was set up for the contest, which was linked to the websites of the Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and contained uploaded video and written testimonies of atomic bomb survivors, translated into several languages. People around the world were invited to watch and read their living testimonies and, if inspired, to create and submit poems. In the end, 741 poems were submitted. The contest evolved into a dialogue among those visiting the site and sharing the common goal of international peace;

(c) Since 2010, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands has provided grants to three doctoral students pursuing research on the subject of non-proliferation. By funding these researchers, the Netherlands is seeking to contribute to the education of a new generation of non-proliferation experts. Investing in young academics is especially important, as academic knowledge contributes to progress on non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. Furthermore, the Security Policy Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has

opened a Facebook page aimed at students to call attention to security-related issues, such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. On the page, students can find interesting facts and participate in discussions;

(d) In December 2011, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Poland to the United Nations and International Organizations in Vienna, in cooperation with the Vienna Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, conducted a seminar entitled “In search of a new framework for nuclear disarmament: 20 years after the new beginning”. The event sparked a results-oriented discussion among representatives of academia, independent experts and non-governmental organizations on arms control and disarmament issues. Students and teachers from the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna took active part in the event.
