

Seoul Youth Declaration for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

30 June 2021

Preamble

We, the young people from around the world, gathered at the Youth Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation,

Recalling relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the issues of youth, peace, and security,

Recognizing United Nations Resolution 74/64 co-sponsored by 84 Member States and adopted by consensus at the Seventy-fourth Session of the General Assembly in December 2019, in which it encourages the Member States, the United Nations, relevant specialized agencies, and regional and sub-regional organizations to engage, educate, and empower youth in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, and taking note of its second proposal this year,

Recognizing also Action 38 of the disarmament agenda put forward by the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, in which he describes young people as a tremendous force for change in the world who have proved their power, time and again, in support of the cause of disarmament,

Appreciating the Republic of Korea and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs for facilitating space for constructive and engaging discussions among youth participants on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, including through the co-hosting of the Youth Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation on 29-30 June 2021,

Declarative Section

(SDGs)

1. We call for acknowledging the fundamental importance of a youth-inclusive and youth-led disarmament education at the level of - (i) policy-making (through evidence-based research with a focus on young people's experiences vis-a-vis armed conflict/use of arms), (ii) schools (through compulsory and standardised curriculum on disarmament at pre-tertiary levels), and (iii) community sensitisation, vocational training and dialogue (by supporting grassroots youth efforts and young leaders as 'champions for change').

2. We call for dedicating adequate resources for young people working on disarmament issues and establish a 'Youth Empowerment Fund' (YEF) for young individuals and youth organisations that would support (i) developmental opportunities linked to youth entrepreneurship, (ii) economic, social and psycho-social assistance to young survivors of armed conflict, (iii) wider, more inclusive eligibility criteria for youth organisations to avail themselves of existing funding opportunities and (iv) partnerships between young individuals, organisations and networks in the form of joint projects, study tours, common action plans and response on disarmament issues, with an outlook towards sharing of good practices and diverse experiences.

3. We encourage to (i) mainstream youth participation (through a specified youth quota, reflective of Member States' internal demographics, as an official prerequisite within their Delegations on all matters relating to disarmament and non-proliferation), (ii) incorporate 'multi-perspectives' of youth with diverse identities (social, cultural, geographic, gender, ethnicity, among others) in discussions with policy-makers, (iii) proactively consolidate youth feedback on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, particularly from decentralised levels - grassroots advocates and organisations on disarmament issues that is convened periodically by relevant UN entities and fosters continued dialogue and coordination on topical issues.

(New and Emerging Technologies)

4. We call for the integration of an ethical framework that incorporates data verification and provenance, with respect to Member States' citizens' personal and private data, in order to reduce biases in data processing and respective algorithms and applications as well as securing data for protection against actors that may choose to use it in hostile manners.

5. We encourage strict regulations on Autonomous Weapon Systems to prevent proliferation and ensure that machines do not have the capacity to independently operate in conflicts without significant human participation in terms of authorization and control of their use and deployment.

6. We support the formation and central role of ethical committees that analyse and assess the general-use potential of research, thereby identifying any elements of the research that may in part or in full be used in a hostile manner by states or non-state actors.

(Gender)

7. We call for the equitable, full and effective participation and leadership of all genders - particularly those holding diverse, intersectional backgrounds and identities - at all levels of arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation processes and decision-making. This may be achieved through: setting gender targets for disarmament meetings; fully integrating inclusive practices and culture across institutions; the use of quantitative and qualitative standards to

track the full and equal participation disaggregated by gender in UN-led disarmament processes; and ensuring the representation of persons or organizations of marginalized groups. Further, we call for avoiding gender stereotypes in the discussions on participation and for consideration of shifting the discourse away from binary genders that risk excluding non-binary persons.

8. We call for gender-responsive disarmament education through holistic integration of gender perspectives into all channels within and outside of the school and university system and through outreach and media. We urge adequate long-term investment in the monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of gender-responsive disarmament education on the basis of standard indicators.

9. We call for the recognition of the gendered impacts of all types of weapons and weapon technology, and consequently, urge them to be structurally incorporated as part of any wider analysis that may be undertaken in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Further, we underline the importance of collecting gender-disaggregated data, conducting analysis of gender norms in relation to weapons and providing disarmament policy-makers with gender mainstreaming training to ensure gender-responsive decisions.

About the Declaration

This Declaration has been developed by the 25 representative participants of the Youth Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation hosted by the Republic of Korea and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

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