

JOINT CIVIL SOCIETY STATEMENT ON HUMANITARIAN DISARMAMENT

**UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security
October 17, 2025**

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Thank you.

I am pleased to deliver this joint statement on behalf of nearly 100 civil society campaigns and organizations.

Humanitarian disarmament has made a critical difference over the past three decades in saving countless lives around the world and in setting norms that endure over time. The people-centered approach aims to prevent and remediate arms-inflicted human suffering and environmental harm, and it has shown its ability to weather geopolitical tempests.

Since last year's First Committee meeting, humanitarian disarmament has faced attacks on multiple fronts that have challenged the progress it has made. The use of antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions as well as threats of the use of nuclear weapons highlight the ongoing dangers posed by internationally banned weapons. Some states have decided to withdraw from the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions, further endangering civilians due to the prospect of additional new use. The failure of states to comply with the Arms Trade Treaty and implement the commitments of the Political Declaration on the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas has meant civilians have not been protected in current armed conflicts. Progress on a treaty on autonomous weapons systems is not keeping pace with technological developments.

Nevertheless, while not a panacea, humanitarian disarmament has helped reduce the human cost of weapons for decades and will continue to do so. It has made a concrete difference in the protection of civilians by stigmatizing and decreasing use of certain weapons, reducing stockpiles, and advancing clearance and victim assistance measures. In the process, it has overcome hurdles, such as the post-9/11 world, changing governments, economic turmoil, and the evolving nature of war.

The central principles of humanitarian disarmament can both sustain this movement and ensure that it responds to today's global challenges, including the growing disregard for the rule of law and financial shortfalls for the humanitarian sector. Those principles include:

1. *A humanitarian focus:* The goal of protecting civilians is a purpose that can transcend political and national differences.

2. *A cooperative approach*: States should meaningfully involve and work in partnership with each other, civil society, international organizations, and survivors in decision-making processes to benefit from their expertise and preserve the humanitarian focus.
3. *A commitment to international law*: International law, including humanitarian disarmament, creates obligations for states parties and standards that influence states and other actors outside of a treaty. States should not only create new law, but also implement, defend, and strengthen the law that already exists.
4. *Ability to adapt*: Humanitarian disarmament is adaptable, as shown by its move from conventional weapons to weapons of mass destruction and its application to new topics, such as the environment and armed conflict, the destruction of cultural heritage during conflict, and torture-free trade.

To maximize the influence of humanitarian disarmament and help it address current challenges, we urge states to:

- Ensure that the core characteristics of humanitarianism, cooperation, rule of law, and adaptability guide all efforts addressing disarmament issues;
- Highlight the humanitarian concerns raised by problematic weapons in the course of discussions at First Committee;
- Call, depending on the specific issue, for upholding the existing norms, improving implementation, and creating new or stronger law; and
- Join and fully implement and comply with humanitarian disarmament instruments.

States should act now to push back against the threats to international law and help humanitarian disarmament achieve its full potential. Doing so is in the interest of us all.

Thank you.

Supporting Campaigns

Control Arms

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

International Campaign to Ban Landmines-Cluster Munition Coalition

International Network on Explosive Weapons

Stop Killer Robots

Supporting Organizations

Action for Women and Children Concern (AWCC) Somalia

Action on Armed Violence
Action Pour le Developpement des Jeunes au Congo
African Council of Religious Leaders- Religions for Peace
Alianza por el Desarme Nuclear
Állítsuk meg a Gyilkos robotokat Kampány
Amnesty International
Amputee Self-help Network Uganda (ASNU)
Article 36
Aotearoa New Zealand Campaign on Military Spending
Aotearoa New Zealand Joint Working Group on Landmines and Cluster Munitions
Aotearoa New Zealand National WPS NGO Network
Arab Human Security Network
Associazione Nazionale Vittime Civili di Guerra
Azerbaijan Campaign to Ban Landmines
Belgian Coalition against Nuclear Weapons
Cadre de Concertation des Associations des Veuves au Burundi - CCAVB
Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace (CAMYOSFOP)
Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas
Campagna Italiana contro le Mine
Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)
Centro de Estudios Ecuménicos - Promotora de Paz
Cercle des Jeunes pour une Société de Paix (CJSP)
Comisión General Justicia y Paz
Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety
Conflict and Environment Observatory
Danish Refugee Council
Deutsche Friedensgesellschaft – Vereinigte KriegsdienstgegnerInnen (DFG-VK)
Dhesarme - Brazilian Action for Humanitarian Disarmament
Disability Rights and Disarmament Initiative
Facing Finance
Femmes Unies pour la Paix dans la région des Grands Lacs (FUP-GL)
Friends Committee on National Legislation
HANAHR.net
Harvard Law School's International Human Rights Clinic
Human Rights Watch
Hunter Peace Group
ICAN Aotearoa New Zealand
ICAN Australia
ICAN France
ICAN Norge

Indian Institute for Peace Disarmament & Environmental Protection
info.nodes
International Peace Research Association
International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)
IPPNW Canada
Irish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament
Japan Campaign to Ban Landmines
Jesuit Refugee Service
LABRATS
Legacies of War
Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)
Mines Action Canada
National Network on the Use of Explosive Weapons (Aotearoa New Zealand)
Naturefriends Greece
Nei til Atomvåpen
New York Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (NYCAN)
Nonviolence International
Nonviolence International Canada
Norwegian People's Aid
Norwegian Physicians Against Nuclear Weapons
Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and its youth initiative, Reverse The Trend: Save Our People,
Pacific Network on Globalisation
Pathways To Peace
PAX
Pax Christi International
Pax Christi IRELAND
Pax Christi USA
Peace Boat
Peace Movement Aotearoa
PEACEMOMO
Peoples Federation for National Peace and Development (PEFENAP)
Perú por el Desarme
Project Ploughshares
Quit Nukes
Rete Italiana Pace Disarmo
RootsAction
SafeGround
Save Our Planet
SEHLAC
Soka Gakkai International

Somali Human Rights Association (SOHRA)
Stop Killer Robots Aotearoa New Zealand
The Civil Affairs Institute
United Nations Association - Sweden
United Nations Association - UK
Vision GRAM-International
West Virginia Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Bombs
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
World BEYOND War
World BEYOND War - Gambia Chapter
XR Peace, Hastings and St Leonards
Yemen Mine Awareness Association (YMAA)
Youth Arts New York
Youths Awaken Foundation (YAF)