
Conference on Disarmament

6 September 2021

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Note verbale dated 27 August 2021 from the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea, addressed to the Secretariat of the Conference on Disarmament, transmitting the statement during its plenary session on 12 August 2021 and 'Seoul Youth Declaration on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation'

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and has the honour to inform the latter that the Republic of Korea requests that the enclosed statement during its plenary session on 12 August 2021 regarding youth and disarmament and 'Seoul Youth Declaration on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation' be circulated as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the United Nations Office for Disarmament the assurances of its highest consideration.



Annex I

Statement by Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative LIM Sang-beom of the Republic of Korea Conference on Disarmament (Thursday, 12 August 2021)

Madam President,

First of all, my delegation would like to thank you, Madam President and your team for convening this meaningful plenary on the occasion of the International Youth Day.

Our special thanks go to Ms. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under Secretary General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, as well as Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, UN Secretary General's Envoy on Youth for their strong commitment and dedication.

We convey warm welcome to UN Youth Champions. We thank you for being together with us and sharing your inspiring ideas and perspectives. We carefully listened to your voices.

As an ardent supporter of the United Nations (UN), and with a firm belief in young people as the ultimate force for change, the Republic of Korea is proud to serve as a champion for Action 38 of the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, which aims to establish a platform for youth engagement.

For its part, the Republic of Korea (ROK) tabled the first-of-its-kind resolution dedicated to youth engagement, empowerment, and education at the UN General Assembly in 2019, which was adopted by consensus with broad support from Member States, including 84 co-sponsors. This resolution recognizes youth as the "key agents for social change, economic development, and technological innovation."

The 2020 Youth Model NPT Conference, held in July 2020, represents another tangible example of the Republic of Korea's initiative in this sphere. This youth-led model conference established a timely outcome document recommending various innovative measures to further the nuclear disarmament efforts. At the 19th ROK-UN Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation held in December 2020, where a youth special session took place to discuss the issue of emerging technologies and disarmament and non-proliferation from the younger generation's perspective, youth representatives from diverse backgrounds communicated the opinions and recommendations of young people and presented their discussion to the Conference participants. The Korea-UN Youth Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation held on June 29th and 30th this year is yet another translation of the Republic of Korea's commitment to furthering youth empowerment, engagement, and education in this field.

The government of the Republic of Korea will continue its dedicated efforts in championing the youth and disarmament agenda and proudly supporting more inclusive participation of youth in key discussions. We will table a resolution on youth and disarmament for the second time since 2019 at the upcoming session of the UN General Assembly. We would like to count on the unwavering support of the international community.

For today's special plenary dedicated to the discussion on youth and disarmament, it is my pleasure to present Mr. In-tae Jang, our Youth Representative. Mr. Jang was born in Seoul, Korea, and he served as one of the 25 cross-regional youth representatives to the Youth Forum held in June this year in Seoul. As a member of the Working Group of Emerging and New Technologies of the Forum, he contributed greatly to the adoption of the Seoul Declaration, the Forum's outcome document.

Madam President, with your and the Conference's indulgence, I would like to give the floor to the Youth Representative of the Republic of Korea, Mr. In-tae JANG.

Statement by ROK Youth Representative, Mr. In-tae Jang Conference on Disarmament (Thursday, 12 August 2021)

Madam President,

High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu,

Distinguished Representatives and Youth Champions,

Fellow Youth Representatives,

It is a great honor for me to attend this conference and deliver this speech.

It would be an understatement to say that we, the youth, as future leaders of this world, have the potential to influence international affairs and the right to voice our opinions to bring forth change to the areas we see fit. The topic of disarmament is no different.

Based on those aspects, the Youth, Disarmament and Non-proliferation resolution; the Youth Forum on Disarmament and Non-proliferation; and the Seoul Youth Declaration as a result of the Youth Forum are three major landmarks in youth empowerment and disarmament. The resolution acknowledges that youth have a vital role in disarmament affairs, while the Youth Forum and Declaration embody this idea.

At the Youth Forum, participants discussed disarmament based on the Sustainable Development Goals, new and emerging technologies, and gender. The discussions laid the foundation for the Seoul Youth Declaration for Disarmament and Non-proliferation, which contains calls for various measures, from such as but not limited to establishing a “Youth Empowerment Fund”, to integrating ethical frameworks for new and emerging technologies, and mainstreaming youth participation. These endeavors are important not only because they are the accumulation of the thoughts of the youth, but also because they are warnings to the international community, saying that the threats new and emerging technologies pose on humanity are no longer lurking in the shadows: that they are in plain sight, and therefore action must be taken.

These endeavors also show that youth have “proved their power, time and again, in support of the cause of disarmament,” as stated in the United Nations Secretary-General’s Agenda for Disarmament. We, the youth, hope these events will take place much more frequently so our voices can be heard more loudly and clearly. Ask not for us to stop contributing, for we, the youth, will continue contributing to make this world a safer and better place.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Annex II

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 i n 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 .

The 25 Declaration Drafting members are as follows: Max Amanu, Theo Bajon, Maurizio Cuttin, Gatwal Augustine Gatkuoth, Akanshya Gurung, Manjiang He, Valentina Bianco Hormaechea, In Tae Jang, Yeti Kakko, Rui Patel Kerr, Jina Kim, Konstantin Olegovich Larionov, Mpogi Tshiamo Mafoko, Nicholas Mahedy, Arpita Mitra, Suryesh K. Namdeo, Linh Trang Phung, Alicia L. Ramdal, Douglas de Quadros Rocha, Olamide Samuel, Muhammad Marsad Siddique, Soukaina Tachfouti, Sanem Topal, Lisa Vickers, Jamie Withorne.

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