



**United Nations Office
for Disarmament Affairs**

**High Representative Nakamitsu's Message at event in celebration of the
International Day for Disarmament and Non-proliferation Awareness**

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High Representative for Disarmament Affairs**

As delivered



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Dear Change Makers,

Distinguished guests,

I am pleased to address you in today's Open Lecture in celebration of the International Day for Disarmament and Non-proliferation Awareness, organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

We meet at a time of mounting geopolitical tensions. The nuclear threat is rising; small arms and light weapons are proliferating, and rapidly evolving technologies are revolutionizing conflict dynamics. All of these are presenting unprecedented challenges for peace and security.

The risk of a nuclear weapon being used is the highest in decades. There should be no doubt: any threat to use nuclear weapons is unacceptable. As history has shown, nuclear weapons are not instruments of stability; rather, they are weapons of indiscriminate destruction. They do not respect borders, beliefs or age.

Disarmament is about building trust through dialogue. With the global disarmament architecture increasingly under strain and with distrust replacing dialogue, the need for disarmament and non-proliferation awareness-raising is all the more crucial.

Young people like you have an important role to play. Meaningful involvement of youth is necessary for disarmament to be more effective, sustainable and inclusive.

You can be at the forefront of innovative change.

Bringing in your lived realities, dynamism, and solutions, you can help identify the opportunities opened by new and emerging technologies and think about ways to use them for a peaceful world.

You must find the courage to take risks. This may involve extending a helping hand to “the other side” and seeking common ground where none seemed possible.

And you should be networked, connecting across generations, across regions, across communities, ideologies and interests.

My Office recognizes that young people are a positive force for change. This is why we are investing in programmes to amplify youth voices and provide the tools to become actors of change. I want to mention two that we launched recently:

“N.O.N.E - or Not One Nuclear Explosion Campaign” - was launched to raise awareness of the devastating consequences of the use and testing of nuclear weapons, with several milestones throughout the year

We have also launched a call for applications for an innovative “Youth Leader Fund for a World without Nuclear Weapons” programme to learn about the consequences of nuclear weapons use.

I encourage your participation in these and other disarmament efforts not only as a moral obligation, but as a necessary means to achieve a safer and more secure world. Our very survival depends upon it.

I thank you very much for your attention and wish you fruitful discussions.