



Peace Movement Aotearoa

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NGO information for the biennial report of the UN Secretary-General on the UN Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education

31 May 2022

Executive summary

Peace Movement Aotearoa is New Zealand's national networking peace organisation. Our core disarmament activities comprise: networking, outreach and disarmament education; national coordination of humanitarian disarmament and related campaigns; and yDISARM (our youth disarmament engagement project).

Among other things, we coordinate the New Zealand campaigns of five global humanitarian disarmament campaigns - on [nuclear weapons](#), [military spending](#), [killer robots](#), [cluster munitions and landmines](#); we coordinate a range of other [national peace and disarmament projects](#); and we are the New Zealand contact for the global campaigns on [EWIPA](#) and [child soldiers](#).

The other main focus of our work is peace and human rights, and we regularly include disarmament issues in our reports to UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies and related publicly available resources.

Peace Movement Aotearoa's web site is the most comprehensive New Zealand peace and disarmament site, providing public information and resources on a wide range of topics.

A. Introduction

Peace Movement Aotearoa is the New Zealand national networking peace organisation, established by the collective will of local and national peace groups in 1981 and registered as a not-for-profit incorporated society in 1982.

We have a collaborative approach to peace and disarmament education: all of our core activities, networking and projects are done in conjunction with our member and supporting organisations, which include a wide range of national and local peace, disarmament, social justice, human rights and faith groups, in varying combinations depending on the particular topic at hand.

We have extensive national mailing lists, which include more than one hundred and fifty contacts for national or local peace, disarmament, human rights, church, faith-based and social justice groups. In addition to our general mailing list, we maintain topic-focused lists for those interested in receiving more detailed information on particular disarmament and human rights issues.

All of the information, updates and educational resources we publish or publicise are distributed via our national mailing lists, seven other national and regional email lists, as well as to international peace and disarmament organisations and networks when appropriate; and posted on our [web site](#),

and shared via social media - [Facebook](#) and Twitter ([here](#) and [here](#)). Peace Movement Aotearoa's web site is the most comprehensive NZ peace and disarmament site, providing information and resources on a wide range of topics.

The informational and educational resources we produce are publicly available online, and are provided in print form for those without internet access and at public meetings and events nationwide; anyone can subscribe to our general or topic-focused mailing lists free of charge; and we freely provide information and analysis on any peace or disarmament topic, or links to where that information can be found, on request.

Since 2019, our Coordinator, Edwina Hughes, has been a member of the Public Advisory Committee on Disarmament and Arms Control ([PACDAC](#)) which provides advice to government on disarmament and arms control, and makes recommendations for grant funding to projects that promote public understanding of disarmament and arms control issues.

The biggest change in our work since our last report has been the COVID-19 pandemic, which has devastated lives and livelihoods around the world, highlighted and exacerbated systemic social, economic and political inequities, and exposed the flaws in government spending and other priorities, including the folly of maintaining armed forces in a constant state of combat readiness when there are so many other more pressing needs. The pandemic has had two main impacts on our disarmament work: on a practical level, we moved immediately to online public forums and meetings (which has resulted in more events, with more participants more widely geographically dispersed than before); and there has been a marked increase in interest in our key messages around disarmament as an essential element of alternative and better ways forward.

B. Disarmament campaigns and public education

Our disarmament work includes public education by way of public forums, conference presentations, guest lectures at tertiary institutions, NGO briefings, media backgrounders and interviews, and widespread dissemination of information, analysis and educational resources on peace, disarmament and non-proliferation topics produced by ourselves and by others.

We provide national coordination for the following global humanitarian disarmament campaigns:

- **Aotearoa New Zealand Campaign on Military Spending** - working on disarmament and the reduction of military spending for sustainable peace and development. Although this campaign provides comments on New Zealand's military spending throughout each year, the key annual dates are the New Zealand release of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) global military spending figures, and the release of the New Zealand national Budget. We produce updated public resources and hold public forums for both dates every year - our theme this year is Time To #BudgetForPeace,NotWar. Our Coordinator is on the International Steering Committee of the Global Campaign on Military Spending;

- **Aotearoa New Zealand Campaign to Stop Killer Robots** - working for a pre-emptive ban on autonomous weapon systems (AWS), with a particular focus on New Zealand's position on AWS. We provide background information and updates on every international development around AWS, including the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) Group of Governmental Experts on LAWS meetings, CCW PrepCom and sixth Review Conference; and resources highlighting the threats AWS pose to humanity. Over the past year, New Zealand's position on AWS has finally moved in a positive direction, we continue to raise issues around this with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFAT) and the Minister for Disarmament and Arms

Control (MDAC). A parliamentary Select Committee is currently considering our Petition to Parliament for national legislation to ban AWS;

- **Aotearoa New Zealand Joint Working Group on Cluster Munitions and Landmines** - working for universalisation and implementation of both Conventions, and monitoring use of cluster munitions and landmines. Our work includes publicising the use of cluster munitions and landmines overseas, key anniversaries and meetings related to the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions, and new resources produced by the international campaigns; as well as providing media briefings on those developments, divestment and the 2009 Cluster Munitions Prohibition Act; and

- **International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Aotearoa New Zealand** - since the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), our focus has been on providing public updates on the status of the TPNW; providing public information on issues around the TPNW; holding regular public (and private) meetings with MFAT and MDAC on the TPNW; and raising issues around the legacy of nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific. Our current focus is on publicising the TPNW First Meeting of State Parties (1MSP) for which we are providing regular public updates, providing background information to the media, and preparing a briefing on New Zealand's responsibilities under Articles 5, 6 and 7.

We also provide regular public updates on other nuclear disarmament instruments (including the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Treaty of Rarotonga, and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) and the 1987 New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act; and publicise key annual dates (such as the International Day Against Nuclear Tests, and Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Day), and hold events to mark key anniversaries (such as the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki).

Our key event in the time covered by this report was 'From Aotearoa New Zealand to the world: Nuclear weapons ban goes global' marking the TPNW Entry Into Force in January 2021 - we organised a hybrid online / in person [celebration in Wellington](#) with Disarmament Ambassador Dell Higgin, Cook Islands High Commissioner Elizabeth Wright-Koteka, the New Zealand Red Cross, Oscar Temaru (former President of French-Occupied Polynesia and Mayor of Faa'a) and Moetai Brotherson (Tavini Huiraatira MP) joining us from Tahiti, and Pacific campaigners for a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (photos [available here](#)); publicised all of the 'New Zealand celebrates global nuclear weapons ban' [events](#); and provided background information to a range of [media outlets](#).

Peace Movement Aotearoa is the national contact for three further global campaigns and networks:

- **International Network on Explosive Weapons** - working for the development of international standards to prevent human suffering from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas;

- **Humanitarian Disarmament Campaigns Network** - Peace Movement Aotearoa is the only New Zealand-based national NGO actively involved in the international Humanitarian Disarmament Campaigns Network, established to collectively advance humanitarian disarmament through multilateral processes; and we regularly forward statements, information about new resources, and opportunities for New Zealand NGOs to be involved in new initiatives, that we have received via the Network to our national disarmament lists; and

- **Child Soldiers Network** - working for state party compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

(OPAC), further information on our public education work around OPAC is provided in section C below.

We also coordinate two national disarmament related campaigns:

- **White Poppies for Peace** - which includes coordination of the Annual Appeal which funds the White Poppy Peace Scholarships to encourage New Zealand research on the impacts of militarism, militarisation and armed conflict, and peaceful means of resolving conflict; and
- **World War One Centenary Peace Project** - which provides alternative views to the dominant discourse, and alternative events such as the nationwide peace vigils on key war anniversary dates that are coordinated by Peace Movement Aotearoa in conjunction with the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Other aspects of our disarmament public education work include:

- **Women, Peace and Security (WPS)** - Peace Movement Aotearoa coordinates the national WPS network, and we provide regular updates about WPS consultations and new WPS resources to the network and the public. Since 2020, we have been focussed on persuading New Zealand to develop its second WPS National Action Plan (the first expired at the end of 2019);
- **‘Let’s Get Disarmament on the Agenda’** - we put together [educational resources](#) prior to the October 2020 national election to highlight the potential of humanitarian disarmament - which prioritises care for peoples and the planet, the prevention of harm, and global cooperation for the common good - as a pathway for a better future; and to promote disarmament as a key priority for future governments. We will be updating these resources prior to the 2023 election;
- **Integrating disarmament into foreign policy** - much of our disarmament work has the goal of better integrating disarmament into New Zealand’s foreign policy priorities, and we provide public education on this including, most recently, on the imbalance between New Zealand’s [military vs humanitarian assistance](#) to Ukraine;
- **New Zealand’s disarmament statements** - we continue to maintain the web page we established in 2017 where all of New Zealand’s disarmament statements are uploaded for easy reference, this is the only online resource where they are publicly available in one place; and
- **‘Securing our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament’** - we continue to publicise the UN Secretary-General’s comprehensive agenda for disarmament, and to highlight its four crucial priorities: disarmament to save humanity, disarmament that saves lives, disarmament for future generations, and strengthening partnerships for disarmament.

Since 2011, our disarmament work has been part-funded by the [Disarmament Education UN Implementation Fund](#), which was established by the government to support the activities highlighted in the 2002 UN Study (A/57/124, 30 August 2002).

C. Human rights / disarmament work and public education

Peace Movement Aotearoa regularly includes disarmament topics in our reports and submissions to UN human rights treaty monitoring bodies, and the linkages between human rights and disarmament are an important part of our public education work, in keeping with paragraph 10 of the UN Study:

“Disarmament and non-proliferation education and training draws upon, contributes to and mutually reinforces education for conflict resolution, communication, cross-cultural understanding, tolerance of diversity, non-violence, economic justice and gender equity, environmental preservation, demilitarization, development, human rights and international humanitarian law. If it is to retain its relevance to the security requirements of peoples and States, disarmament and non-proliferation education and training must not be viewed in a vacuum but rather integrated into that broad perspective.”

Peace Movement Aotearoa is the only New Zealand NGO that provides information to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on New Zealand’s compliance with OPAC, most recently, in our 2020 report to the CRC as it prepared the List of Issues Prior to Reporting for New Zealand’s next Periodic Report (delayed due to the pandemic backlog).

We regularly publicise issues around the CRC’s General Comment No. 19 ‘Public Budgeting for the Realization of Children’s Rights’ (CRC/C/GC/19) in relation to New Zealand’s military spending, most recently for example in the publicity around our [Submission on Budget 2022](#).

Our other work in support of OPAC has included continuing to publicise and raise issues around firearms in schools, and the ongoing militarisation of children and young persons and their education in New Zealand schools - as but one example, more than \$1.7 million (NZD) is allocated each year to the army in the [Education Budget](#).

We are currently providing information on New Zealand’s lack of action on WSP (see WPS section on previous page) for the NGO Combined Report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) for the List of Issues Prior to Reporting that will be prepared during CEDAW’s Pre-Sessional Working Group meeting in July 2022

All of our reports and submissions to UN human rights monitoring bodies are released publicly, and we produce backgrounders and updates for public education and for the media at each stage of the processes involving New Zealand - with an emphasis on disarmament issues whenever we have raised disarmament topics in our reports or submissions.

D. yDISARM (Youth Disarmament Engagement Project)

Since our last report, our yDISARM has been actively engaged in a range of disarmament issues, with a particular focus on AWS and nuclear weapons.

In relation to AWS, yDISARM issued a [Youth Call for Action on Autonomous Weapons](#) in support of the Aotearoa New Zealand Campaign to Stop Killer Robots’ ‘Act Now on Killer Robots’ Petition to Parliament; and spoke in a number of public forums, including the online [Killer Robots Petition to Parliament Handover](#) in September 2021 and the Human Rights Day [Trans-Tasman #BanKillerRobots Forum](#) on 10 December 2021.

In relation to nuclear weapons, yDISARM is currently involved in putting together an online activist exhibition [Navigating the Nuclear Nightmare](#) for Māori and Pacific youth, that will be launched around the TPNW 1MSP.

Thank you for this opportunity to contribute to the UN Secretary-General’s biennial report.