



Intervention in the IPU panel session on eradicating poverty: Implementing UN Charter Article 26 to fund the SDGs

Alyn Ware, PNND Global Coordinator

We are all thankful for the adoption by the United Nations of the Sustainable Development Goals, which demonstrate that the poverty suffered by nearly half the world's population can be eliminated through wise investment and suitable policies. But from where can we find the required investment funds? So far, the mix of public and private investment funds available falls far short of what is required, unless we enact the obligation in UN Charter Article 26 to implement programs for disarmament in order to free up resources for economic and social needs.

With \$1.7 trillion spent annually on the military, there are considerable resources from which to draw. As such PNND highlights the proposal made by President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan to the UN General Assembly for countries to re-allocate 1% of their military budgets to meet SDGs.

We should look in particular look at transferring funds from one of the most unsound, wasteful and dangerous military enterprises in the world – the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

Over \$100 billion per year is spent modernizing, developing, manufacturing and deploying these weapons in the misguided view that threatening to annihilate innocent civilians, and perhaps wipe-out civilization, provides security. These funds could be better spent on education, health, water supplies, food production, climate protection, renewable energy production, peace and diplomacy.

PNND members in nuclear-armed states are taking action to reduce nuclear weapons budgets and re-allocate these funds to development. But they are generally a minority in their parliaments.

PNND members in non-nuclear countries are taking action by adopting measures to divest public funds from nuclear weapons corporations. So far Norway, New Zealand, Liechtenstein and Switzerland have done so. There is now a proposal to the UN Conference negotiating a nuclear weapons ban treaty to include a prohibition on nuclear weapons financing in the treaty. Parliaments and parliamentarians could support this proposal. We must invest not in nuclear weapons, but in peace and development for current and future generations.

Finally, there will be another opportunity to advance this at the 2018 United Nations High Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament. Parliaments should ask their governments now what they are hoping to achieve at the UN High Level Conference.

Thank you