

PNND: Parliamentarians Activities on Nuclear Disarmament
United Nations Vienna on 5th May 2017

FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES,

AS A MEMBER OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT AND AS A Co-PRESIDENT OF PNND I AM VERY AWARE OF THE VITAL ROLE WHICH PARLIAMENTARIANS CAN PLAY IN ACHEIVING NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT.

THOSE OF US WHO SERVE IN PARLIAMENTS IN BOTH NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES AND Non-NUCLEAR WEAPONS STATES, WHETHER IN GOVERNMENT OR IN OPPOSITION PARTIES, HAVE BOTH A LEGAL AND MORAL DUTY TO REPRESENT THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR CONSTITUENTS...AND IT IS, WITHOUT ARGUMENT, IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF ALL OF OUR CONSTITUENTS TO WORK TO ACHIEVE A NUCLEAR WEAPONS FREE WORLD.

IN SCOTLAND I SERVE IN THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT AND IT IS OUR POLICY THAT THE SUBMARINE-BASED TRIDENT NUCLEAR WEAPONS SYSTEM SHOULD BE REMOVED FROM OUR LAND AND WATERS AS QUICKLY AND SAFELY AS POSSIBLE.

THE TRIDENT SYSTEM REPRESENTS THE UNITED KINGDOM'S NUCLEAR ARSENAL AND IT IS ENTIRELY BASED IN SCOTLAND, WHICH IS A SITUATION AGAINST THE WISHES OF THE MAJORITY OF THE SCOTTISH PEOPLE AND, ACCORDING TO TWO MAJOR VOTES IN OUR PARLIAMENT, IT'S ALSO AGAINST THE MAJORITY WILL OF THE MEMBER'S OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT.

FURTHER, OF THE 59 MP'S REPRESENTING SCOTLAND AT THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT ONLY ONE OF THEM HAS VOTED TO RETAIN THE TRIDENT SYSTEM. THIS IS AN ISSUE OF DEMOCRACY, WHICH IT IS OUR OWN DUTY TO RESOLVE IN SCOTLAND...HOWEVER IT DEMONSTRATES THE POLITICAL WILL OF THE PEOPLE AS IT IS REPRESENTED THROUGH THEIR PARLIAMENTARIANS.

THOSE OF US WHO HAVE THE HONOUR TO BE ELECTED TO STAND AS PARLIAMENTARIANS AND WHO SPEAK FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT MUST ALSO REMEMBER THAT WE NEED TO OPERATE ACROSS NATIONAL BOUNDARIES;

WE NEED TO ORGANISE THROUGH BODIES SUCH AS PNND AND WORK WITH OTHER NGO'S SUCH AS THE GLOBAL SECURITY INSTITUTE, IPPNW, THE WORLD FUTURE COUNCIL, [Abolition 2000](#) AND ICAN TO MAXIMISE OUR EFFORTS;

INDEED, THE 'HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS CONFERENCES' WERE SO SUCCESSFUL BECAUSE OF THE WORK OF PARLIAMENTARIANS AND GOVERNMENTS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD COOPERATING WITH THE ICRC TO PROVIDE A PLATFORM FOR THE MAJORITY OF STATES TO PRESENT AN ARGUMENT AGAINST THE MINORITY, SAYING THAT PEOPLE'S FROM ACROSS THE GLOBE ARE AGAINST THE THREATS POSED BY ANY AND ALL NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

THIS HAS OF COURSE LED TO THE UN CONFERENCE ON NEGOTIATING 'A LEGALLY-BINDING INSTRUMENT TO PROHIBIT NUCLEAR WEAPONS, LEADING TOWARDS THEIR TOTAL ELIMINATION'. I BELIEVE THIS HAS BEEN AN HISTORICAL STEP FORWARD – HOWEVER I, AS AMONST MANY PARLIAMENTARIANS, AM AWARE THAT THE PROHIBITION TREATY NEGOTIATIONS MUST BE SEEN AS COMPLEMENTARY TO THE NPT [and the 2018 UN High Level Conference on Nuclear Disarmament](#);

PARLIAMENTARIANS MUST STAND UP IN ALL INTERNATIONAL ARENAS AND ENSURE THAT THEY PERFORM AS THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THEIR ELECTORATES, BY SPEAKING TRUTH UNTO POWER REGARDING THE EXISTENTIAL THREATS WHICH NUCLEAR WEAPONS REPRESENT TO HUMANITY, THROUGH THEIR DESTRUCTIVE POWER AND THEIR POTENTIAL DEVASTATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT.

SO, WE NEED TO USE EVERY AVENUE WHICH IS AVAILABLE AND IF THE NPT CAN BE STRENGTHENED BY A NEW TREATY ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS THEN WE MUST USE THIS TO BEST EFFECT.

AS A PARLIAMENTARIAN I FEEL THAT IT IS MY DUTY TO EXPLAIN MY POSITION ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT TO MY ELECTORATE AND THE WIDER POPULATION AND THEN TO SPEAK UP FOR THOSE WHO WOULD OPPOSE NUCLEAR WEAPONS BUT WHO LACK THE PLATFORM WHICH I AM PRIVILEGED TO OCCUPY.

PNND HAS GIVEN ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERACT WITH MANY HUNDREDS OF OTHER PARLIAMENTARIANS FROM ACROSS THE WORLD AND INDEED FROM ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND I BELIEVE, BECAUSE OF THE WEIGHT OF PUBLIC OPINION IN NATIONS ACROSS THE WORLD, THAT WE WILL END THE CURSE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.

THANK YOU.