

ANNEX IV:

Letter from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the Presidents/ Speakers of all Parliaments

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

24 February 2010

Dear Mr./Madam ...,

We stand at a watershed moment for the achievement of international security through a world free of nuclear weapons. For several years now, momentum has been building towards this goal, due in no small part to the diligent efforts of civil society and parliamentarians.

I have tried to do my part to revitalize the peace and disarmament agenda. In October 2008, I presented a five-point proposal for nuclear disarmament. Greatly encouraged by the support that has been expressed for my initiative, I welcomed, in particular, the call by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in April 2009 for parliaments to instruct their Governments to support this proposal. I salute the Parliamentary Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament for its related efforts and for its work towards building support for a nuclear weapon convention.

Since 2008, we have seen progress. The Russian Federation and the United States have negotiated on further reductions of their strategic nuclear arsenals. The Security Council held a historic summit on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones have entered into force in Africa and Central Asia. Calls for global nuclear disarmament have emanated from many quarters and detailed plans have been proposed containing practical ideas to achieve the goal of global zero.

In order to sustain this momentum ahead of the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, I have proposed an Action Plan on Nuclear Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. My plan is founded on a fundamental principle: nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing and inseparable. In my action plan, I promised to explore ways to encourage greater involvement by civil society and parliamentarians.

Parliamentarians and parliaments play a key role in the success of disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Parliaments support the implementation of treaties and global agreements contributing to the rule of law and promoting adherence to commitments.

They adopt legislation that increases transparency and accountability, thus building trust, facilitating verification and creating conditions that are conducive to the further pursuit of disarmament.

At a time when the international community is facing unprecedented global challenges, parliamentarians can take on leading roles in ensuring sustainable global security, while reducing the diversion of precious resources from human needs. As parliaments set the fiscal priorities for their respective countries, they can determine how much to invest in the pursuit of peace and cooperative security. Towards this end, parliaments can establish the institutional infrastructures to support the development of necessary practical measures.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to encourage all parliamentarians to join in efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. In particular, I call upon parliamentarians to increase their support for peace and disarmament, to bring disarmament and non-proliferation treaties into force, and to start work now on the legislative agendas needed to achieve and sustain the objective of nuclear disarmament.

I look forward to opportunities to work with you to advance global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Yours sincerely,
BAN Ki-moon