



Statement from H.E Abdul Samad Minty

The international community is in urgent need of an approach to weapons elimination and reduction. An approach as comprehensive as those adopted to mitigate the effects of climate change. Contemporary efforts towards nuclear disarmament remain, by permitting the UK, US, France, Russia and China to possess and develop modern nuclear weapons systems, and extend their nuclear umbrella by encouraging the dependence of Non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWS) to their nuclear capabilities. This reality necessitates a new approach to disarmament.

Since the 1990s, the global community of nations has recognised human-driven climate change as a threat to human security and sought to act to confront this enormous challenge. Following the withdrawal of the US and Russia, from the INF Treaty, similar effort is needed in global disarmament to protect the salience of the principle of irreversibility as it relates to disarmament legislation.

I address this statement to all concerned parties in Africa, whether state representatives, NGOs, policy makers or students, calling on all nations to recognise the threat conflict and armed violence poses. I recognise the potential for African stakeholders to act multilaterally to hold Nuclear Weapons States accountable. To adopt tangible and verifiable measures to prevent the deadly resurgence of large-scale warfare. Substantial challenges remain, if we are to make ‘Silencing the Guns’ a reality, but in this statement, I wish to highlight Africa’s past and future global role in weapons elimination and management.

The transformation process in my country fundamentally altered the role of apartheid South Africa, from a threat to international peace and security to a democratic state determined to act as a responsible world citizen. This included the early elimination of all its nuclear weapons - a goal for which some of us fought over several decades. Since its inauguration in May 1994, the South African Government committed itself to a policy of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control which covers all weapons of mass destruction and extends to include the proliferation of conventional arms. This policy forms an integral part of South Africa’s commitment to democracy, human rights, sustainable development, social justice and environmental protection. Democratic South Africa’s commitment to disarmament was never a goal in itself. It is based on our belief that international peace and security cannot be divorced from development - that global security is not achievable when enormous resources are diverted towards the acquisition and multiplication of destructive capabilities; while more than a billion people around the world continue to suffer from hunger and deprivation.

The African Union has itself become a Nuclear Free Zone with the realisation of the Treaty of Pelindaba. This example is one that the European Union – so often regarded a model for the AU – should follow.

In addition to acknowledging the link between security and development, my approach to international security is also based on the reality that the threats of the post-Cold War world transcend traditional boundaries, within an increasingly interconnected world. This reality



requires a new approach to international peace and security beyond the narrow, state-centric security paradigm that dominated the twentieth century. I believe that common threats can only be effectively addressed through enhanced international cooperation and strong international institutions that can respond to our collective security concerns. Our approach, should therefore be one that addresses common security concerns rather than those of certain blocks, regions or security alliances.

In his inaugural address launching the new disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future*, the UN Secretary General Guterres highlighted the elimination of war as an instrument of foreign policy, as the core rationale for the establishment of the United Nations. A goal which remains unattained. The utility of disarmament is not restricted to the prevention and cessation of violence. It supports sustainable development, and resonates with the values and principles upon which the United Nations was founded. Scarce resources are squandered on increasingly sophisticated military capabilities, and are siphoned away from initiatives which aid the creation and preservation of stable societies, strong institutions and human rights.

I believe that common threats can only be effectively addressed through enhanced international cooperation and strong international institutions that can respond to our collective security concerns. We must realise the Secretary General's vision to scrap or control weapons of war in the world. This requires a campaign that is cognisant of best practice, the collective security, disarmament and deterrence nexus, and the step-by-step approach.

The SCRAP project aims to fill this void. A Strategic Concept for the Removal of Arms and Proliferation, designed to implement the recent foundational initiative of the UN Secretary-General's Disarmament Agenda. The SCRAP Treaty takes the most detailed provisions of existing US-Russia, NATO-Russia, and the Iraq WMD inspection regimes and weaves them into a global scheme to ensure disarmament for the common good of humanity. It offers precision tools for enforceable global weapons control to be placed in the hands of movements, NGOs, Parliaments and Governments, intended to use disarmament and arms control to save lives, uphold international law, and to allow the re-prioritisation of development and human security. Participation and leadership from Africa is greatly needed. With African leadership we can develop this Strategic Concept into a truly global resource. The SCRAP Treaty exists to reassure and empower those alarmed at the current turn of world events, to aspire for and work towards a safer world.