Open-ended Working Group taking forward
multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations\(^1\)

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Item 5 of the agenda
Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations

Towards a United Nations agency that will include the mandate to educate the global public on the treaty banning nuclear weapons

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Introduction

1. The Center for Peace Education (CPE) fully supports the working paper submitted by Palau, Samoa, Nauru, Fiji, and Tuvalu entitled "Elements for a Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons". Their recommendations to the Open-ended Working Group to immediately begin setting the elements to be contained in a treaty banning nuclear weapons and developing a clear road map with timelines for negotiating such a treaty are very sound in the light of the catastrophic humanitarian, economic and environmental consequences of nuclear weapons production, testing and use. Their final paragraph aptly quotes the words of United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon: "Ridding the world of nuclear weapons would constitute a global public good of the highest order."

Recommendation on oversight, review and implementation

2. The working paper submitted by Palau and four other Pacific nations recommends that "an agency should be established, possibly under the auspices of the United Nations, to promote the universalization and full implementation of the treaty and to provide secretariat support for periodic review conferences of States parties. The agency should also have a mandate to educate the global public about the role of the treaty, as well as the catastrophic

\(^1\) Established pursuant to resolution 70/33 of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

\(^2\) A partner organization of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).
humanitarian consequences of the use and testing of nuclear weapons, including in the Pacific.”

**Educating the Global Public on the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapons as a Pathway to Sustainable World Peace**

3. Education has a critical role to play in building sustainable world peace. Education shapes people's mindsets, influences attitudes and values, and encourages the will to act in accordance with those values. Hence, it is important to include in the tasks of the proposed agency mentioned above a mandate to educate the world's peoples on the absolute necessity of having the Treaty. It needs to be understood by all, young and old, that the Treaty that will prohibit the production, possession and use of such weapons will redound to the benefit of all humanity and our Earth home.

4. The risks and consequences associated with nuclear weapons are unacceptable. Studies on their environmental and health effects have all declared this in categorical terms. A world war involving these weapons can mean the annihilation of the entire human species. And even without a war involving these weapons, their continuing production and modernization use up limited resources, which otherwise could be used to meet basic human needs and bring true human security. This nuclear arms race towards more "sophistication" and destructive capabilities exposes the human community to enormous human, ecological and economic costs.

5. The goal of promoting disarmament education, esp. nuclear disarmament education, is not merely to provide information, but more importantly to cultivate people's critical capacities to challenge the current global situation, particularly the prevailing war system which has given the impetus in developing more and more destructive weapons. It has to be an education that also pays attention to issues of morality and sustainability. Finally, it has to be an education that encourages those in the academic institutions and in the public realm to be active participants in the ongoing struggle for the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction as part of the broader struggle to delegitimize the use of violence in resolving conflicts. It will seek the development of globally-oriented and future-oriented citizens who are aware, concerned and willing to act towards a world that is more caring and respectful of all humans and of our Earth home.

6. This Working Paper calls to mind the United Nations Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education (A/57/124) that was submitted to the First Committee of the General Assembly at its 57th session on 9 October 2002. The Study sought to revitalize past efforts at disarmament education, which it considered an integral part of peace education. More information on the UN General Assembly resolution 55/33 E, entitled "United Nation study on disarmament and non-proliferation education" can be found in [http://www.un.org/disarmament/topics/education/](http://www.un.org/disarmament/topics/education/).