



## Disarming Nuclear Weapons Movements

Denuclearisation of Nuclear disarmament is central to achieving peace. Although it is only one aspect of militarisation, its significance cannot be understated. Most of the world did not know much about nuclear arms until 1945 when the United States conducted the first ever nuclear test, named “Trinity”. Two nuclear bombs were tested in two locations in Japan, Hiroshima and Nagasaki. More than 50,000 buildings and 120,000 killed within minutes (Cirincione, 2007). This caused alarm and resulted in the establishments nuclear disarmament movements whilst a nuclear weapon race among countries started.

The first Peace movement started in 1954, where more than 35 million people signed a petition calling for a ban on nuclear weapons (Croddy & Wirtz, 2005). In the UK, several thousand people marched from Trafalgar Square, London to the Atomic Research Establishment, Berkshire in Easter, 1958. Similarly, on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1961, 50,000 women marched in 60 cities of the United States to record their protest against nuclear weapons. This march was brought by Women Strike for Peace.

More actions resulted in a moratorium on above-ground nuclear weapons testing, signed by John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev in 1963 (Sagan, 2011). U.S. President Reagan was among the initiated nuclear disarmament discussions with the Soviet Union. Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) changed to Strategic Arms Reduction Talks, reflecting the change in approach. One million people gathered at New York Central Park and protested against nuclear weapons in 1982. Labelled as the largest protest held against nuclear weapons in American history (Kroenig, 2019); it reflects how movements took time to build before the rapid advancements of technology.

The Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 prohibited all type of nuclear testing except for (underground). The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty of 1968 limited the spread of nuclear weapons. The Interim Agreement on Offensive Arms of 1972 prohibited ballistic missile launches between the U.S. and Soviet Union. The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 prohibited ABM deployment to only two at two sites between the US and Soviet Union. The Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty of 1979 limited the US and Soviet Union to the same number of ICBM and SLMB launchers. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty of 1987 prohibited the use of long- and short-range nuclear weapons on a global scale.

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty of 1991 limited long-range nuclear forces. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty of 1996 banned all type of nuclear explosions in the world, but still not in force. The New Start Treaty of 2010 limited the deployment of nuclear weapons by half. The role of the United Nations cannot be denied in nuclear disarmament in the world. These developments reflect that citizen action can influence policy makers in some way. Although more radical instruments are not always enforced, it reflects that inroads can be made through strategically chipping away at systemic threats to humanity.

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)'s establishment in 1998 is dedicated to promoting non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Global Zero is a non-partisan group working on an international scale that includes 300 leaders from all over the world (Magliveras, 2020). This reflects the need for more global approaches to stimulating conversations on the threats of nuclear weapons. Opposing countries of nuclear disarmament stress the need for nuclear weapons to deter other countries.

Peace and security are critical to Africa's development and prosperity. As the most vulnerable to most actions of or emanating from developed states in the climate crisis, exploitation, illicit financial flows, and wars. Colonialist tendencies continue to aggravate vulnerabilities, which leave the region paying the costs of other nations. The role of women and youth remains to be fully articulate in the world's peace agenda. More glaringly within the region, significant work needs to be done to ensure young Africans' involvement and engagement to appropriately equip and strengthen leadership in fostering peace and disarming nuclear weapons.

## References

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