



# **Report of the UN Secretary-General on disarmament and non-proliferation education**

***Contribution by the International Student/Young Pugwash (ISYP)***

***(June 2022 – May 2024)***

## **Executive Summary**

**International Student/Young Pugwash (ISYP) is a network that engages in dialogue on issues at the nexus of science and security, especially nuclear weapons policy. ISYP's education efforts primarily target university students, graduate students, and young professionals, offering them knowledge and strategies to advance disarmament and non-proliferation. One of ISYP's educational techniques is facilitating discussions between individuals from multiple countries, who can teach each other about their differing outlooks.**

**From June 2022 – May 2024, key programs included a conference in Berlin on the "Third Nuclear Age," a virtual event on engagement opportunities in arms control, and roundtables on South Asian nuclear policy. ISYP also hosted or co-organized ten webinars and talks featuring experts and peer educators. In addition, ISYP has developed a resource list for young professionals. These efforts enhance participants' understanding of and capability to pursue disarmament and non-proliferation measures. More information may be found at [isyp.org](https://isyp.org).**

## **Audience and Strategy for ISYP's Educational Work**

**International Student/Young Pugwash (ISYP) is a network that engages in cross-national dialogue and cooperation on issues at the nexus of science and security, including disarmament and non-proliferation. Our education efforts mostly center on nuclear weapons. University students, graduate students, and other young adults (age 35 and under) comprise ISYP's primary audience. Some of these individuals are just beginning to study or work on WMD policy, so ISYP's programming exposes them to knowledge that can**

**shape their perspectives—for example, regarding humanitarian implications of nuclear weapons. For students and young professionals who are already working to promote disarmament and non-proliferation, ISYP programs teach them strategies to succeed, including policy mechanisms, technical methods (e.g., for verification), and approaches to collaborating with relevant groups.**

**ISYP’s educational work takes place at in-person conferences, in virtual talks and webinars (using Zoom and Twitter Spaces), and through virtual roundtables and discussions. Two groups impart knowledge at these programs: senior experts and early-career peers. In this way, ISYP provides students and young professionals with opportunities not only to learn, but also to teach. In the context of peer-education, one of ISYP’s techniques is to facilitate discussions between individuals from multiple countries—who can teach each other about their differing outlooks. Such familiarity with a range of perspectives enables our audience to more effectively pursue disarmament and non-proliferation measures.**

### **“Third Nuclear Age” Project**

**In 2022, ISYP hosted three days of programming in Berlin for students and young professionals. This workshop covered nuclear arms control and disarmament, advancements in nuclear technologies and measures for non-proliferation, and how emerging technologies intersect with non-proliferation and disarmament.**

**The workshop included three educational components:**

- **Presentations and lessons from senior experts regarding political and technological challenges in the realm of nuclear non-proliferation, delivery vehicles and launch technologies, nuclear threat reduction, arms control and disarmament, and emerging technologies in the current nuclear age.**
- **Knowledge-sharing by early-career peers (all attendees had the opportunity to present). For example, young physical scientists and social scientists taught each other about technical and political challenges to non-proliferation, respectively. Participants also shared knowledge of diplomatic and other strategies to avoid arms races, and in some cases, to achieve disarmament.**
- **A hybrid writing workshop by the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* to better equip students and young professionals to communicate their insights regarding topics at**

**the intersection of science and security, including disarmament and nonproliferation. After the conference, ISYP supported participants in publishing articles in the *Bulletin*.**

**This conference was made possible by partners including the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, the German Foundation for Peace Research, Third Nuclear Age Project, Heinrich Boll Stiftung, Universität Duisburg-Essen and the *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*.**

**As a continuation of its “Third Nuclear Age” Project, ISYP reached out to Ministries of Foreign Affairs, International Organizations and research institutions in 19 countries worldwide to convene 30 consultations on how nuclear policy intersects with climate change, social justice issues, and public education. Through these consultations, early-career participants learned how senior diplomats and civil society experts understand the factors informing disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, today. ISYP is now processing the acquired information and writing a research report as an educational product. The report will inform youth-led “policy hackathons” on nuclear threat reduction and disarmament.**

## **Virtual Event on “Engagement Opportunities in Arms Control, Disarmament & Non-Proliferation” in Partnership with VCDNP and IAI**

**At a virtual program for students and young professionals in November 2022, seven youth-oriented organizations presented on their work in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. By teaching attendees about the range of groups in this field, and how to best engage with each group, the event empowered young people to contribute to disarmament and non-proliferation. After the presentations, attendees interacted directly with representatives from the seven groups in breakout rooms, providing an opportunity to ask questions. Over one hundred students and young professionals attended the program.**

## **Virtual Roundtable Discussions**

**In 2022, ISYP launched a series of virtual roundtables on nuclear weapons issues in South Asia to foster dialogue by and for emerging experts. The first roundtable took stock of participants’ perspectives on contemporary nuclear policy challenges in South Asia, and**

the second centered on the “cyber-nuclear nexus.” Each roundtable included three presentations, moderated conversations in breakout rooms, and a plenary discussion; the second meeting also featured a scenario-building exercise.

Participants in the roundtable series include students and young professionals in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal. Participants frequently expressed that the roundtables were crucial for understanding “what the other side is thinking,” equipping participants to more effectively reduce nuclear threats in South Asia and pursue disarmament.

Our program partners are the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies; the Centre for Security, Strategy and Policy Research; and the Nepal Institute for International Cooperation and Engagement.

## Virtual Webinars, Talks, and Interviews

ISYP hosts virtual programs to educate our network about nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Highlights since June 2022 include:

- Three interviews of students and young professionals regarding their research and perspectives (*e.g.*, on AI and nuclear weapons), shared via Twitter Spaces.
- A talk and discussion with Bo Jacobs, professor of history at the Hiroshima Peace Institute, on his book “The Global Hibakusha.” This program educated students and young professionals on the effects of radiation from nuclear testing, production, and use (in WWII) on communities worldwide.
- A roundtable co-hosted with APLN on “Keeping Nuclear Memories Alive,” in which a panel of five young experts weighed-in on questions including, “How can we ensure that the humanitarian costs of nuclear weapons are taken into account in policymaking? How can we educate the public about the risks and costs of nuclear weapons? What strategies can make this education effective and impactful?”
- A panel discussion on “Humanitarian Impacts and the NPT” co-hosted with IPPNW Students, BASIC, and the EVN, which educated attendees about the role of early-career professionals in furthering work on humanitarian impacts within the NPT process.

- An event on **“The Pugwash Nobel Peace Prize 27 Years On,”** which highlighted lessons that today’s disarmament advocates can learn from Joseph Rotblat and the early history of Pugwash.
- A talk and Q&A with **Charles Weiss**, the World Bank’s first Science and Technology Advisor, with advice for young people on how to build their careers and effect change, especially in-pursuit of arms control and disarmament.
- A discussion on **“The Cuban Missile Crisis After Sixty Years”** co-hosted with the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. At this event, two experts taught a group of young attendees about takeaways from the Cuban Missile Crisis for current efforts to reduce nuclear weapons risks, advance arms control, and pursue disarmament.
- ISYP presented at a workshop on nuclear threats at the International Centre for Theoretical Physics. Our talk **informed early career physicists** about approaches to working on disarmament and non-proliferation (including groups to join). For more senior physicists, we proposed strategies to engage young scientists in disarmament efforts.

## **Educational Materials**

In 2024, ISYP developed a **resource list** for university students, graduate students, and young professionals on disarmament and non-proliferation. This webpage compiles online courses and simulations, sources for research and policy analysis, advocacy opportunities, and databases with up-to-date information. ISYP’s resource list helps young people to learn technical and policy information, keep up with nuclear policy developments, and connect with like-minded individuals and organizations.