



United Nations

Disarmament Week 24-30 October

Held from 24 - 30 October, International Disarmament Week is a United Nations observance calling the world to rethink its reliance on weapons and move the conversation from militarisation to peacebuilding. First declared in 1978, it is not by coincidence that the week commences on the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations: it is hard to conceive a more pressing issue in the world today.

Why it matters

The world is entering a dangerous new era of warfare. Nuclear powers are upgrading their arsenals with faster, deadlier, and more precise weapons, even as key arms control treaties collapse or stall in deadlock. At the same time, autonomous weapon systems, capable of selecting and engaging targets without human oversight, are advancing faster than international law can keep up.



The global arms trade is booming, funnelling weapons into volatile regions and fuelling prolonged conflicts. From Gaza to Ukraine, Sudan to Myanmar, we're seeing the brutal consequences of unchecked militarisation: cities reduced to rubble, civilians caught in the crossfire, and a world edging closer to irreversible catastrophe.



Across the world, we are witnessing a quiet but troubling rise in authoritarianism with regimes consolidating power, silencing dissent, and using force to impose control. What was once unthinkable is becoming disturbingly normal, where violence used as a first resort, not a last. In this climate, the role of the United Nations as a voice of reason and restraint has never been more vital, nor more challenged. The UN continues to advocate for diplomacy, disarmament, and the protection of human rights, often against overwhelming odds.

But as global power dynamics shift and multilateral cooperation frays, the question must be asked, "Can the UN still hold the moral ground, and will the world listen?"

The vision of a world free of weapons

Disarmament isn't just about reducing weapons, it's about saving lives, protecting human dignity, and redirecting resources to what really matters, including healthcare, education, climate action, and justice.

The UN's "Agenda for Disarmament" outlines four key goals that align closely with our mission:

1. Prevent mass destruction – Phase out nuclear weapons and other WMDs.
2. Curb everyday violence – Control the spread and misuse of conventional arms.
3. Protect future generations – Ensure ethical development of military tech.
4. Build strong partnerships – Empower civil society, women, youth, and local leaders.

Hope's invitation



In a world increasingly at ease with violence and force, International Disarmament Week is a reminder that peace must be actively pursued, and the nurture of caring communities is where that starts. This week calls on governments, civil society, educators, and ordinary citizens to take part in the conversation and be proactive toward a more secure, less militarised world. This October, we encourage you to:

- Host or join a peace-focused discussion in your local community.
- Share stories and facts about the impact of armed violence.
- Write to your local MP urging support for disarmament policies.
- Follow and amplify disarmament efforts online using the week's hashtags and UN resources.



Peace begins with truth, with courage, and with ordinary people taking everyday actions. Let's make Disarmament Week more than a date on the calendar, let's make it a movement.

(Written by Perry Bowe - HOPE researcher Qld)