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THE SCRAP PROJECT: A REALISTIC APPROACH TO DISARMAMENT

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The United Nations has just celebrated its 75th anniversary. Established in the ashes of the world's worst war, it provides for a structure of global governance in which resort to force, to the extent necessary, is carried out by the organization. In other words, it envisions that nations no longer rely on arms for security. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has just celebrated its 50th anniversary, 25 years of which represent its indefinite extension, having been agreed to in 1995. The NPT notably requires its 191 parties to achieve nuclear disarmament, pursuant to a treaty on general and complete disarmament.

The SCRAP project seeks this outcome by its several components. In particular, it proposes an arrangement bringing together elements that relate to biological and toxin, and to chemical weapons, and to nuclear and conventional weapons. There are other weapons of mass destruction, so far notional, such as radiological, even environmental. The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention cover their categories. There are a number of IAEA-related undertakings constraining radioactive materials, and the Environmental Modification Convention prohibits manipulating the weather, climate, and other geophysical processes as weapons. Over the decades agreements have constrained nuclear and conventional weapons. But both remain in unfortunate abundance: nuclear weapons are increasing in some states, and many conflicts using conventional weapons are underway as we meet.

Accordingly, the SCRAP project has, among other elements, a legally binding treaty, that provides a template of how states can bring together measures already agreed among states party to one or another treaty, in such a way that both nuclear and conventional weapons are either prohibited outright, or placed on a schedule leading to their elimination.

Bearing in mind the statement made part of the arms control canon by General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev and President Ronald Reagan, in speaking of how to proceed: "Trust but verify," the SCRAP treaty contains verification provisions, such as on-site inspection and use of satellites, to ensure that the process leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons, and of the great preponderance of

conventional weapons, would be accomplished in a trustworthy, that is verifiable, way.

The project accordingly has no illusions of reaching agreement on terms that would be less than confidently accepted by the world's nations and peoples. It might be termed, in words used elsewhere in this gathering, an approach to integral disarmament, in the promotion of integral security.

The celebration of the 50th anniversary of entry into force of the NPT, currently envisioned to be held in August 2021, is a highly appropriate occasion to focus on the obligations undertaken by *all* parties to the Treaty, not just the nuclear-weapon states, to achieve both nuclear disarmament and “a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” [1] While the Article's text on nuclear disarmament is somewhat complicated in today's world, the International Court of Justice has affirmed that the obligation to nuclear disarmament is categorical.

The SCRAP treaty provides the basis, in today's world, for achieving “general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.” It also makes clear that the elements that it draws together from existing agreements are not some far-off utopian end, but elements based in reality. It thus is reasonable to devote substantial effort to motivating the international community, through the NPT review process, and other forums such as the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Conference, meetings under the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, and bilateral and larger groups of nuclear-weapon-possessing states, to greatly accelerate their efforts. It is not to be expected that we shall wake up one day soon to discover a world free of any weapons save those at the disposal of the United Nations or in the service of policing. But it can be the case that a global mobilization of support for much more far-reaching measures, measures monitored as they are agreed and implemented, can compel governments to address and achieve such measures, in an ongoing and evolutionary process with a welcome end.

[1] Text of NPT Article VI:

Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.