UNFOLD ZERO is a platform for United Nations (UN) focused initiatives and actions for the achievement of a nuclear-weapons free world.

UNFOLD ZERO aims to unfold the path to zero nuclear weapons through effective steps and measures facilitated by the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, UN Secretary-General and other UN bodies.

UNFOLD ZERO coordinates and implements program activities of the Abolition 2000 Working Group on Peace, Disarmament and the SDGs.

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UNFOLD ZERO 2022 Report

UNGA Resolution 1

UNFOLD Zero promotes civil society and government action to commemorate and implement the very first resolution of the UN General Assembly which was adopted by consensus on January 24, 1946 and which called for the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

On January 24, 2022, UNFOLD ZERO released a Call to prevent nuclear war and abolish nuclear weapons: Implementation of UN’s first ever resolution. The call, which was supported by a number of former high-level government officials (ministers, ambassadors...) from nuclear armed and non-nuclear states, highlighted the high risk of nuclear war and the setting of the Doomsday Clock to 100 Seconds to Midnight and supported the Open Letter Fulfil the NPT: From nuclear threats to human security which will be presented to the States Parties to the NPT at the NPT Review Conference in August 2022.

“Nuclear weapons threaten current and future generations. They cannot resolve the conflicts between countries, and they are counter-productive to the human security issues of today and tomorrow – the COVID pandemic, climate crisis, food security, cybersecurity, and achievement of the sustainable development goals. It’s time to fulfil the NPT and the goal established by the UN in 1946 to eliminate nuclear weapons globally.”

Maria Fernanda Espinosa, President of the 73rd UN General Assembly. Member of the World Future Council and supporter of UNFOLD ZERO

UN Day Against Nuclear Tests, August 29

UNFOLD ZERO, Basel Peace Office and Bike for Peace organized an event outside the UN in Geneva on August 29, the International Day Against Nuclear tests, followed by a bike ride the next day to the UN Missions of Russia, France and the United Kingdom. We presented letters to the Ambassadors calling on the governments to adopt measures to prevent nuclear war, such as No-First-Use policies, and to commit to the global elimination of nuclear weapons no later than 2045, the 100th anniversary of the UN.

UNFOLD ZERO also promoted the ATOM Project minute of silence on the International Day to honour those impacted by nuclear tests.
Securing our Common Future: UN Secretary Generals’ Disarmament Agenda

UNFOLD ZERO supports and promotes Securing our Common Future: A Disarmament Agenda, which was released by the UN Secretary-General on International Women’s Day for Peace and Disarmament, May 24, 2018. This includes co-organising with Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) an annual event on May 24, circulating UNSG statements on disarmament during the year, and promoting Securing our Common Future in various other UN-related forums and processes to ensure they include a high priority on disarmament. These include the Coalition for the UN we Need (the civil society platform following up on the UN75 anniversary), the Hiroshima Organization for Global Peace (HOPE) project to include nuclear disarmament in the post-2030 UN SDGs and in preparations for the UN Summit for the Future in 2023.

UN and the Russia/Ukraine war – including nuclear risks

UNFOLD ZERO has been active in promoting United Nations approaches and initiatives to address the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the catastrophic impacts this is having on Ukrainian citizens and on human security regionally and globally, and the increased risks of nuclear war arising from the invasion. This has included promoting the UN General Assembly resolutions on the invasion and actions in the Human Rights Council, International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice.

“Ukraine is on fire. The country is being decimated before the eyes of the world. The impact on civilians is reaching terrifying proportions. Raising the alert of Russian nuclear forces is a bone-chilling development. The prospect of nuclear conflict, once unthinkable, is now back within the realm of possibility. It’s time to stop the horror unleashed on the people of Ukraine and get on the path of diplomacy and peace.”

UN Secretary-General António Guterres, March 14, 2022

See UNFOLD ZERO, Putin has put nuclear war back on the table
Common / Human Security

UNFOLD ZERO promotes the Common Security and human security frameworks of the United Nations, and their importance in helping to facilitate global nuclear weapons abolition.

The Common Security framework establishes obligations, processes and mechanisms for addressing international conflicts in peaceful ways to ensure security for all nations. It is based on obligations in Articles 2 (3) and 2 (4) of the UN Charter and processes/mechanisms in Articles 33-41 of the UN Charter.

What is Common Security

Common Security refers to building security between nations through international law, diplomacy and conflict resolution. It is based on the notion that national security cannot be achieved or sustained by threatening or reducing the security of other nations, but only by ensuring that the security of all nations is advanced.

The Human Security framework, as outlined by the United Nations and reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals, aims to “address widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people.” It calls for “people-centred, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people.” (UNGA Resolution 66/290)

UNFOLD ZERO cooperated with PNND and others on a number of events over the past year advancing the Common and Human Security frameworks and including reference to these frameworks in various statements and appeals, for example Fulfill the NPT: From nuclear threats to human security, an Open Letter to the NPT organized in cooperation with NoFirstUse Global.

UN, Peace, Disarmament and COVID-19

UNFOLD ZERO has been active in 2020 - 2022 on the UN, Peace, Disarmament and COVID-19. This included promotion of the UN Secretary-General’s initiative for a global ceasefire to help address the pandemic, cooperation with PNND on Disarmament, Public Health and Pandemics and blog articles including:

- Human Security and the United Nations are vital to address the pandemic;
- UN Secretary-General urges global ceasefire to enable management of coronavirus pandemic;
- Coronavirus, armed conflict and children: African youth urge support for UN ceasefire call.
UN High Level Weeks:
Global weeks of action on peace, climate, SDGs & nuclear abolition

At its 2019 Annual Meeting, Abolition 2000 established a working group to advance this Global Week of Action to include UN Day for Peace (Sep 21), UN High Level events on climate and sustainable development (Sep 22-25) and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (Sep 26). In 2021, this was extended to also include the International Day of Nonviolence (Oct 2). UNFOLD ZERO worked with Abolition 2000 members to promote the week through blogs, outreach and events. See for example, Actions and Events for UN High Level Period, Sep 21 – Oct 2.

In addition, UNFOLD ZERO organised a special promotion for the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons which included a Call on governments to use the opportunity of the High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament to take action on nuclear risk-reduction and disarmament, a social media action and an invitation to endorse the Global Appeal for a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World.

International Day for Nonviolence- Oct 2
We also organized a special event Nonviolence in the 21st Century to commemorate the UN Day of Nonviolence on October 2, the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi. The event included an introduction to the philosophy behind nonviolence, its necessity for human survival, the range of methods and applications of nonviolence and some recent examples of nonviolence in action. It featured Ela Gandhi, grand-daughter of Mahatma Gandhi, and non-violence practitioners and Right Livelihood Laureates from India, USA, Africa and the Pacific.
UN Disarmament Week:
The UN and the Climate – Nuclear Disarmament Nexus

UN Disarmament Week runs from October 24-20. For UN Disarmament Week 2021, UNFOLD ZERO organized a special event The UN and the Climate - Nuclear Disarmament Nexus. In addition to commemorating the week, it was held as preparation for the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) in November 2021 and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2022.

Speakers included Hon Maria Espinosa, President of the 73rd UN General Assembly, Ambassador Thomas Graham, Head of the US Delegation to the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and others. The event focused on key initiatives and United Nations processes on climate protection & stabilization, nuclear risk reduction & disarmament, the connections between these two issues and the ways in which like-minded governments, legislators and civil society can make an impact.

UNFOLD ZERO News

UNFOLD ZERO News is an electronic newsletter/update that goes to a mailing list of over 4000 subscribers. UNFOLD ZERO produced 33 updates in 2021 and 21 so far in 2022. Some of the updates are designed specially for UN diplomats and are sent to them.

UNFOLD ZERO organizations