Disarmament or development?
Linkages between international development frameworks and nuclear weapons
Background

• The global discourse on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament has become much more **open and dynamic** since the adoption of the NPT Review Conference Outcome Document (2010)

• Owing to their devastating consequences, and their effects not being constrained by national borders, nuclear weapon detonations have **ramifications for all sectors of society**

• Not just a security issue, but increasingly also a development issue

• How does nuclear disarmament relate to other shared ambitions of the international community?
Nuclear weapons & development

- Development and use of nuclear weapons both pose challenges to international development.

- The development and production absorbs financial and institutional capacity that could otherwise be invested in a country’s development agenda and socio-economic priorities.

- In the event of a nuclear detonation, both immediate and long-term consequences would undermine sustainable development.

- In today’s connected global economy, a disaster occurring in a major economic hub would have repercussions on the global economy.
Opportunity costs

- Pursuit of nuclear armament is costly and *diverts resources* from other priorities
- For developing countries, the opportunity costs are significant (India and Pakistan allocate more than 1% of government spending on their nuclear weapon programmes)
- Funds used for developing and maintaining nuclear weapons could be invested in development-inducing measures
- 33 States Parties to the Tlatelolco Treaty have acknowledged the opportunity cost
- Nuclear weapons portrayed to offer security benefits, but unfit to deal with poverty, economic inequality, global warming, food insecurity, natural resources shortage, disease, civil war, org. crime etc.
Nuclear detonation

• The **immediate effect** would be a powerful blast, and release of heat waves and an electro-magnetic impulse and ensuing radiation

• A large number of people would be killed, public organs incapacitated and infrastructure destroyed

• In developing countries, the effects would be even more serious

• Reasonable to expect that national capacity would be overwhelmed, requiring international assistance

• Would need extensive international assistance from UN organs, the WHO, Doctors Without Borders, the ICRC and Red Crescent Societies and CARE + many more
Environment, agriculture, food

- Radionuclides likely to contaminate farmlands over a large area
- Developing countries are typically reliant on natural resources and agriculture – would severely impact the economy
- Climate disturbances would likely exert significant pressure on global food supplies, putting millions at risk of famine, and a decline in the global food supply would pose a threat to the world’s poorest
- Could reverse years of hard won economic and development progress
- Developing countries likely to require international assistance for a long period of time
Symbiotic relationships

- Recognition of the symbiotic relationship between peace, development, and human rights has informed the humanitarian development discourse for a long time.

- The UN Charter strongly suggest socio-economic development as an important condition for people’s enjoyment of human rights and the promotion of peace and security.

- Millennium Declaration 2000

- The United Nations long seen development and disarmament as important tools for building a world free from want and fear.

- Development increases states’ capacity to respond to contingencies that could lead to war, instability, terrorism and organised crime.
Nuclear disarmament

- Since the UN’s establishment, nuclear weapons have been recognised as one of the main threats to international peace and security.
- UN General Assembly called for elimination of national armaments of atomic weapons already in 1946.
- The Millennium Declaration urges states to ‘strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons’.
- 2005 report by the UN Secretary General acknowledges the effects of nuclear weapons on development.
- Due to their catastrophic consequences, nuclear weapon detonations have the capacity to reverse years of progress in development.
The post-2015 agenda

- The international development agenda guided by eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) since 2000
- Significant progress been made, yet many of the world’s most vulnerable people remain excluded from development processes
- Threats to the global climate appear more serious than before
- Post-2015 Development Agenda place food shortage, climate change, lack of jobs and epidemics in a peace and security perspective
- Nuclear weapons and disarmament have been absent
- Development frameworks should take into account nuclear weapons as a potential threat to the implementation of the global agenda
Conclusion

• Owing to their dependence on natural resources, lower purchasing power and lack of institutional capacity, developing countries are especially vulnerable to the effects of nuclear war.

• Curbing the development and production of nuclear weapons would free up resources, which could be allocated to more benign purposes.

• Only the total elimination of nuclear weapons would ensure that these weapons do not set back efforts to promote sustainable development.

• Post-2015 constitutes an opportunity to reaffirm the interdependent relationship between development and disarmament.