



**Message of the Secretary-General to the Annual NATO Conference
on WMD Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-proliferation**

Delivered by
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Madame Secretary Kuret of Slovenia,
Deputy Secretary General Vershbow of NATO,
Assistant Secretary General Ducaru of NATO,
Director-General Uzumcu of OPCW,

Out at the outset I would like to thank NATO for its annual convening of this conference. It is a testament to the alliance's commitment to these vital issues of international peace and security.

I also want to thank our generous host, the Government of Slovenia. As the Secretary-General said when he visited in 2012, Slovenia is a strong partner of the United Nations. As a party to every major agreement, Slovenia is also a strong ally in the cause of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

I now have the privilege to deliver a message on behalf of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon.

“Quote”

I am pleased to greet the annual NATO Conference on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

The United Nations attaches great importance to its invaluable partnerships with NATO and many other regional organizations and arrangements across the world.

NATO, as a regional collective security institution, continues to have an essential role to play in disarmament and arms control efforts, both regionally and globally.

I encourage NATO to enhance its engagement in this area, and work together with regional countries to reduce tension, build confidence and advance constructive dialogue.

The United Nations welcomes NATO's commitment to our shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, as expressed through your declaration in 2012.

Beyond traditional security threats, the world faces new threats that NATO is well placed to help address. Cyber- and outer space represent new military frontiers where developments threaten to outpace our response capacities. Emerging technologies such as autonomous weapons, and ever-more sophisticated missiles, are similarly challenging to collective security.

Threats are especially acute where such hazards intersect. The nexus between chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons, cyber security and terrorism is a case in point.

We need to cooperate with agility and creativity to respond to these 21st-century concerns, just as we continue to strive for shared solutions to the security dilemmas we inherited from the 20th century.

The United Nations looks forward to working with important security institutions such as NATO to achieve our shared goals of security and peace.

“Unquote”

Thus concludes the message of the Secretary-General.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Now I would like to add a couple of short points.

First, the world cannot and should not return to the nuclear dangers that plagued the Cold War and the ever present threat of nuclear annihilation.

States should recall that during times of heightened tension during the Cold War, the international community managed to make progress on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control measures which then served as important steps to reduce tensions and build confidence. We must act now to rebuild engagement and resume making progress.

My second point is to underscore the Secretary-General’s comment about the UN’s commitment to its partnerships with regional organisations.

Every region faces different and unique security challenges, including on disarmament and non-proliferation. That is why the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), often through our regional centres in Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific, has forged a network of relationships with regional organisations – from the OSCE to CELAC – to ensure we can best assist their members.

I hope this conference will contribute to enhancing a mutually beneficial relationship between UNODA, NATO and all partners present here, OPCW, CTBTO and the EU, in a manner that furthers our shared goal of a world without nuclear, chemical and other forms of weapons of mass destruction, and a safer, more secure and better world for all.

I thank you.