



Prepared for the DSC AGM, 25 August 2023

Reporting Period: 26 August 2022 – 25 August 2023 (AGM to AGM)



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Disarmament and Security Centre

Prepared by Kate Davidson for the DSC AGM, 25 August 2023  
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# Disarmament and Security Centre

## Annual Report – Narrative Summary

### Executive Summary

In late 2022 and into 2023 the Disarmament and Security Centre's (DSC) work started to return to pre-Covid restriction levels with more in-person activity. After evolving to deliver virtual education during the Covid-19 pandemic we now find ourselves striking a successful balance between our virtual education and our in-person delivery.

In October 2022 DSC Programme Manager, Lucy Stewart went on maternity leave with her position being split across two new staff members: Kate Davidson focusing on disarmament education and Megan Blakie focusing on fundraising and administration. The end of 2022 was quiet for the DSC with school and university holidays. This provided the new staff with an opportunity to settle into their positions and upskill themselves in how the DSC works as well as the organisation's disarmament and peace activities. Come late January 2023 Megan resigned for health reasons and despite having limited human resources the DSC has had a successful 2023 to date in carrying out its mandate.

Our focus remains disarmament education delivery to encourage a deeper understanding of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control grounded in the principles laid down in the 2002 UN Study on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education with a focus on the tertiary level. We continued to build our relationship with university student clubs: UCDisarm and Te Ao o Rongomaraeroa Students Club at the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies across the University of Canterbury and University of Otago campuses. Our engagement with high schools and community groups within the Canterbury region continued as did our peace heritage work.

We engaged with academics across Aotearoa New Zealand universities creating new relationships and building on those we had already established. These relationships have fed into our Disarm Kōrero sessions, our bi-monthly online discussion series where we address a topical disarmament issue. In these sessions we have tried to strike a balance between having a more senior academic or expert and an upcoming researcher.

Our work reaches beyond our organisation education programme. We are active within Aotearoa civil society disarmament coalitions such as the Peace Foundation's International Affairs and Disarmament Committee and we contribute an Aotearoa perspective on disarmament to international civil society campaigns such as the International Peace Bureau and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). Programme Manager Lucy Stewart continues in her public advisory role to the government through sitting on the Public Advisory Committee for Disarmament and Arms Control (PACDAC), and Angela Woodward (Council) sits on the Working Group on Autonomous Weapons Systems providing advice to the government. The DSC also stays committed to contributing to New Zealand's disarmament diplomacy by attending or observing disarmament treaty conferences, online or in-person where able to and by engaging government officials such as the Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control and representatives from international organisations on disarmament issues.

In terms of the global context of disarmament in which we work it has been difficult to remain optimistic in the past year. The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved their Doomsday Clock 90 seconds to midnight in January 2023 - the closest to global catastrophe it has ever been. Specifically mentioned in the decision to move it was the ongoing invasion of Ukraine and the continuing threat this causes to international security, established norms, the state-based international system, Russia's nuclear threats, and the volatility of Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhia nuclear reactor sites. Russia has also, to the best of our knowledge, moved nuclear weapons to neighbouring ally Belarus. Further disheartening news was the announcement of the US providing Ukraine with cluster munitions – however the country [was quickly called out for this decision](#) showing norms against the weapons are firmly established.

However, there has been snippets of positive disarmament news, Sri Lanka announced the successful completion of its domestic ratification process for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the United States of America destroyed the last of its chemical weapons arsenal. Norwegian People's Aid released the [Nuclear Weapons Ban Monitor 2022](#) checking in on the progress of the on the TPNW. It shows significant progress was made in 2022 with a number of new TPNW signatories and parties. However, the report also states that the number of nuclear weapons available for use globally increased in 2022, as did their destructive power. On this point ICAN also

published [Wasted: 2022 Global Nuclear Weapons Spending](#). It shows nine countries spent \$82.9 billion on nuclear weapons, of which the private sector earned at least \$29 billion in 2022.

In terms of international meetings with a disarmament focus there has not been much tangible success in terms of prioritising disarmament. The G7 countries met from 19 May 2023 – 21 May 2023 in Hiroshima, Japan. Their statement on nuclear disarmament was criticised for lacking substance. From 31 July 2023 – 11 August 2023 the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) met in Vienna, Austria. The meeting failed to make significant progress concluding without adoption of a factual summary agreed to by all states parties. The chair was prevented from issuing the summary in his own capacity as a working paper. However, Aotearoa New Zealand along with like-minded state attempted to bring the focus and consensus back to nuclear disarmament.

Locally in the South Pacific reaction to the AUKUS trilateral security pact has been swift from civil society and South Pacific countries condemning the nuclear-powered submarines Australia is set to acquire and the growing geopolitical pressure on the region by the world's big power. Pacific and Asian young people and leaders have also vocalised their concerns about Japan's contentious plan to release treated nuclear wastewater from the tsunami-hit Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean.

## Our Mission

1. Promote peace and disarmament education throughout the education system and the wider community.
2. Provide a resource centre for alternative thinking on disarmament and security issues both within Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally and to disseminate research through publications, websites, and conferences.



## Our Vision

Promote a climate of peace in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## Our Team

Our team:

### Staff:

Lucy Stewart (Programme Manager)

Kate Davidson (Programme Manager – Disarmament) until September 2023

Patrick Kinney (Researcher / Project Support)

### Governance Council:

Acting Chair - Angela Woodward (VERTIC)

Chair - Dr Treasa Dunworth (University of Auckland Law lecturer - on sick leave)

Treasurer - John Ruane

Secretary - Prue Stringer (WILPF)

Dr Kate Dewes (Former Director of DSC)

Zahra Emamzadeh - PhD UC

Dr Peter Wills - (UoA Physics)

Mere Ratuva

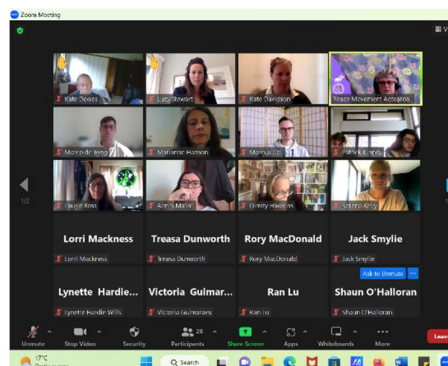
Advisor / Former Director / now volunteer: Commander Robert Green, Royal Navy (Ret'd)

## Key Highlights of the Reporting Period

### Disarm Kōrero

Over the year we hosted two online learning sessions under our bi-monthly series, Disarm Kōrero with a hiatus over the summer months.

On Wednesday the 22nd of March 2023 we had Dr Marianne Hanson of the University of Queensland and recent doctorate graduate of Oxford University, Marco De Jong speak about the AUKUS trilateral agreement and what it meant for the South Pacific and Aotearoa. This was attended by about 30 people and generated an interesting discussion after the presenters had spoken.



The second session was held on Wednesday the 31st of May and focused on International Humanitarian Law and civilian protection. We had Dr Thomas Gregory of the University of Auckland and Maria Rabino-Neira of Victoria University present their research on the topic. It was attended by about 20 people and was followed by some interesting discussion attracting comment and questions from academics and The NZ Red Cross.

### Amuri Area School

After doing a summer of outreach the Amuri Area School History teacher asked the DSC to come in and do a guest lecture to her year 11, 12 and 13 history students. It was an excellent lecture with the students fully engaged. They made some comparisons between the country's nuclear free movement and the opposition to the Springbok tour. At the end Kate Davidson spoke to the students about study and career opportunities in disarmament. The school is enthusiastic to continue the relationship and host us again.

### Tertiary Education

On May the 16th 2023 Angela Woodward, DSC Council Chair (Acting), and Kate Davidson gave a guest lecture to University of Otago, Te Ao o Rongomaraeroa | National Centre for Peace and Conflicts Studies students. After the class they met with the Te Ao o Rongomaraeroa Student Association to further build on the already established relationship with the Association and incoming leadership. Angela and Kate





met with staff at the Centre to discuss how we can further our relationship and teaching opportunities.

Angela Woodward also gave a guest lecture on "International Law in Action", focusing on non-proliferation and disarmament law, to the ILAP613 Advanced Principles of International Law course at the University of Canterbury, on the 24th of May 2023.

On the 2nd of May 2023 Kate Dewes gave a one-hour presentation on nuclear politics to a Master of Arts (Political Science) class of about 17 students via Zoom at Victoria University. There was lively question time and discussion indicating many had done the readings provided on New Zealand's anti-nuclear history, including the World Court Project, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

We will be presenting a presentation to the University of Waikato students in early September via Zoom and another in-person lecture at the University of Canterbury in October.

## Events and Initiatives

### Launch of the Peace Train in Ōtautahi, Christchurch

On Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 the Peace Train did its first public laps around South Hagley Park, bringing joy to those who rode and watched it. The Peace Train was gifted to the city by Yusuf Islam (formerly Cat Stevens) after the March 15 terror attacks in 2019. Yusuf Islam was so moved by his visit to the city after the attacks and how the city was rising above the horrific act of violence, he donated his chugger train to Ōtautahi Christchurch.

The launch event was a wonderful success with a large crowd, young and old, all hoping to ride the train along with a strong media presence ([TVNZ](#), [Newshub](#), [RNZ](#)).

There were many supporting organisations present, such as the DSC, InCommon and Mahia te



Aroha. We were pleased to be able to work alongside the Christchurch City Council to get this initiative off the ground. It also aligns flawlessly with Christchurch's Peace City status.

### Hiroshima and Nagasaki 78<sup>th</sup> Remembrance Day



On the 6<sup>th</sup> of August this year we hosted a moving memorial event of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki 78 years ago. The event held at the World Peace Bell in Christchurch Botanic Garden was attended by about 80 people with several speakers, songs and ringing of the bell. Flowers were floated down Ōtakaro The Avon River in memorial at the end of the official ceremony. From the DSC Lucy Stewart, Dr Kate Dewes and Patrick Kinney all spoke, and Kate Davidson was emcee.

The event was delivered in partnership with WILPF, and the World Peace Bell Association and we continue our steadfast relationships with these organisations.

### Christchurch Heritage Festival

In partnership with the University of Canterbury Disarmament Club, UCDisarm, we hosted an annotated film evening celebrating Ōtautahi, Christchurch as New Zealand's first Peace City and Aotearoa, New Zealand as a nuclear-free nation. The event was part of the Christchurch City Council Heritage Festival. About 25 people joined the event as we journeyed into Ōtautahi, Aotearoa, and Te Moana Nui a Kiva (the Pacific Ocean) regional

peace and disarmament history through film and discussion. Kate Dewes and Lucy Stewart hosted the evening providing context for the film clips shown and facilitating interesting discussion.



## Peace City Work



Kate Dewes and Rob Green's home, Te Whare Maukaroko, has been adopted as place of architectural and social history status for the 40 years of peace work which the whare has hosted.

## Christchurch City Council Intangible Heritage Grant

We received funding through the Christchurch City Council Intangible Heritage Grant fund and are working in partnership with Christchurch City Libraries' Digital Content Team to digitise documents, photos, ephemera relating to key aspects of the peace movement in Christchurch and we will weave the stories of these events and people throughout. It will make a living archive and capture the intangible peace heritage of our peace city in a free, open access platform that is available in perpetuity for all.

## Other Outreach and Disarmament Education Initiatives

### University Clubs

We supported UCDisarm on Clubs' Day at the University of Canterbury Campus. They had a great turnout with about 40 people signing up to the Club. It was the first time Clubs' Day had occurred in person since the pandemic began. It was a warm, sunny day and the University campus was buzzing with student energy.



We organised an event with the Club in Semester 1 where Olivia Shimasaki from The Peace Foundation came and spoke to the group about peace and disarmament, and we had a sit-down chat over nibbles about potential study, funding, and career options in disarmament. The Club has run a few events over the year with a good turnout and

### UCDisarm

President - Patrick Kinney  
Secretary - Harriet Stock  
Treasurer - Sam Roberts  
Executive members – 7  
Club membership - 40 students

Patrick has spoken to Political Science classes about the Club. We have been sharing research, internship, study and career peace and disarmament opportunities that come available with the Club via its Facebook page.

As discussed earlier we met with the Te Ao o Rongomaraeroa Student Association while in Dunedin in May. We further supported the Club in submitting a submission that aligned with its feedback to the University of Otago which was proposing to make changes to the Te Ao o Rongomaraeroa National Centre for Peace and Conflicts Studies.

### Secondary and Tertiary Sector Education

We did outreach to relevant university contacts over the 2022/23 summer period. We heard back from academics at the University of Auckland, Auckland University of Technology, University of Waikato, the University of Canterbury, and the University of Otago.

As discussed above we did several guest lectures this year and will continue this for 2023 with guest lectures to The University of Waikato and the University of Canterbury scheduled.

Over the next year we will further extend our relationships and outreach to education institutes while developing and delivering on the [Tertiary Scoping Project](#) to try establish a consistent disarmament tertiary level and professional disarmament course.

### Public Outreach

Over the 2022/23 year we continued to build on our relationships with other non-government organisations working in peace and disarmament in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad. We also assisted students, educators, academics, researchers, and the public who were interested in our resources and disarmament materials. We maintained our social media, website and newsletter giving updates on disarmament and peace and in promoting our resources and materials and new materials and content from our partners in disarmaments.

In terms of media Kate Dewes was on the documentary [Brave New Zealand World](#) broadcast through streaming and on television in late 2022. Kate also spoke with [Speak Up-Korerotia](#) in



November 2022 for an episode titled From Parihaka to Persia: Peace commemoration in Christchurch.

## DSC Coordination and Management

### Professional Development

Kate Davidson went to the [Nuclear Connections Across Oceania](#) conference hosted by Te Ao O Rongomaraeroa Student Association, Te Ao O Rongomaraeroa National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies, and Kā Rakahau o Te Ao Tūroa Centre for Sustainability at the University of Otago in Ōtepoti Aotearoa.

The conference was an excellent opportunity for her to learn more about the impacts of nuclear testing across the Pacific and make connections with other conference attendees. As a result of the conference attendance, she has been able to connect with up-and-coming voices within the field and already established academics. One of the speakers Marco de Jong has participated in one of our Disarm Kōrero sessions and Associate Professor Fiona Amundsen has been in contact with the DSC on visual arts projects she is working on and is interested in participating in a Disarm Kōrero session.

The DSC will look at further professional development for Patrick as he settles into his new role with the organisation.

## What's Ahead

Kate Davidson, who has been acting as Programme Manager – Disarmament for Lucy Stewart's maternity leave, is leaving the organisation at the end of August. Patrick Kinney started with the DSC in August 2023, and we are looking forward to having him on board to assist with research, events, and publications with a particular focus on the youth arm of the organisation through the University of Canterbury UCDisarm Campus Club.

It has been a quieter than usual year on the international disarmament front for the DSC and we are looking forward to getting back to our work on the international stage while also building on our relationships with tertiary institutions, delivering our business-as-usual education programme and

outreach, and refocusing on delivering more of our recommendations from our Tertiary Scoping Project.

## Thank You

Thank you to all those who support us on a voluntary basis and who come to us to seek advice and resources about peace and disarmament. We also want to acknowledge those who participate in our events, education delivery, and to our resources.

Thank you also to the Disarmament Education UN Implementation Fund Grant and those in the community who have made donations to our work. Now more than ever the need for civil society and governments to continue pushing for disarmament is critical and we could not do our education work without your support.

The DSC is an incorporated society [registered](#) on the Charities Register. The registration number is CC11049