



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH APRIL 2013 ARTICLES

This newsletter is part of Inter Press Service (IPS) and Soka Gakkai International (SGI) project. It includes independent news and analyses as well as columns by experts, news from international NGOs and a review of the global media for a glimpse of what is happening on the ground. Newspaper articles reproduced in this newsletter are for personal use and aim at giving information to readers. Reproduction in whole or in part without permission is prohibited.

In-Depth Reports

Youth Holds Out Hope For Banning Nukes



BERLIN | GENEVA - If it were up to the youth, all nuclear weapons in global arsenals would be declared inhumane and a comprehensive treaty banning these would be put in place. This is the upshot of an international survey released at the United Nations Office at Geneva ([UNOG](#)) during a milestone conference. The survey, carried out by youth members of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), shows that 91.2% of respondents aged between 15 and 45 are of the view that nukes are inhumane and 80.6% favour a comprehensive global treaty banning all these weapons of mass annihilation. ➤ Pages 2-3

Civil Society Raises Pressure Over NPT



GENEVA - As parties to the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) begin their second preparatory conference in Geneva on Monday, representatives of civil society and several countries have decided to bring the festering nuclear issue and its potential humanitarian consequences to the centre stage. "The NPT has its own process and business as usual," said Rebecca Johnson, co-chair for the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a Geneva-based global coalition of pressure groups working on disarmament and a

ban on nuclear weapons.

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From Non-Proliferation to a Total Ban on Nukes



MELBOURNE - At the beginning of March, the Norwegian government hosted a landmark conference in Oslo on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the inability of relief agencies to respond effectively in the event of a nuclear attack. More than 120 governments, the Red Cross and several UN agencies participated. Their message came through loud and clear: the only way to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again is to outlaw and eliminate them without further delay. This unprecedented gathering of diplomats, experts and civil society actors was part of a new humanitarian-based approach to nuclear disarmament, which evolved out of the

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Youth Holds Out Hope For Banning Nukes

By RAMESH JAURA*



BERLIN | GENEVA (IDN) - If it were up to the youth, all nuclear weapons in global arsenals would be declared inhumane and a comprehensive treaty banning these would be put in place. This is the upshot of an international survey released at the United Nations Office at Geneva ([UNOG](#)) during a milestone conference.

The survey, carried out by youth members of the Soka Gakkai International ([SGI](#)), shows that 91.2% of respondents aged between 15 and 45 are of the view that nukes are inhumane and 80.6% favour a comprehensive global treaty banning all these weapons of mass annihilation.

SGI is a socially engaged Buddhist association with over 12 million members around the world. It has been campaigning for the abolition of nuclear weapons since the second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda's Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons issued on September 8, 1957. In 2007, SGI launched the [People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition](#) campaign in order to galvanize public opinion in favour of banning all nuclear arsenal.

In fact SGI president Daisaku Ikeda put forward in his annual Peace Proposal 2010 the idea of organising a nuclear abolition summit in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2015 to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of those cities. He reiterated the proposal in 2011 and the following year, and suggested the possibility of even organising the 2015 NPT Review Conference in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In [Peace Proposal 2013](#), Ikeda went a step further and pleaded for an expanded summit for a nuclear-weapon-free world: "The G8 Summit in 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, would be an appropriate opportunity for such a summit, which should include the additional participation of representatives of the United Nations and non-G8 states in possession of nuclear weapons, as well as members of the five existing NWFZs (nuclear weapons free zones) and those states which have taken a lead in calling for nuclear abolition."

It is against this backdrop that youth members of SGI [surveyed](#) between December 2012 and February 2013 a total of 2,840 young men and women in nine countries: Japan, USA, Britain, Italy, Australia, South Korea, Brazil, Malaysia and Mexico. These included official and unofficial nuclear weapons states, those under a U.S. nuclear umbrella and others in NWFZs.

Significance of survey findings

The significance of the survey findings is underlined by [Global Zero](#), a movement campaigning for a world without nuclear weapons, which estimates that the nine official and unofficial nuclear weapons states spent about \$100 billion on their nuclear programs in 2011.

This conservatively assessed expenditure represents about 9% of their total annual military spending. Global Zero estimates that at this rate the nuclear-armed states will spend at least \$1 trillion on nuclear weapons and their direct support systems over the next decade.

The nine states include Russia, United States, France, Britain, and China, which are recognised as official nuclear weapons states under Article 6 of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ([NPT](#)) as well as Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea considered as unofficial nuclear weapons states. ☺

*The writer is global editor of IDN and its sister publication [Global Perspectives](#), chief editor of [IPS Germany](#) as well as editorial board member of [Other News](#). He is also executive president of [Global Cooperation Council](#), [board member of IPS international](#) and global coordinator of SGI-IPS project for strengthening public awareness of the need to abolish nukes.



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The results of the survey carried out by SGI youth members were presented to Ambassador Cornel Feruta of Romania, chair of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2015 NPT Review Conference from April 22 to May 3, 2013 in Geneva.

The findings were released about two months after the ground-breaking [intergovernmental conference](#) organised by Norway's foreign ministry in Oslo on March 4-5 to focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

The Oslo conference followed up on a movement to outlaw nuclear weapons that has been growing since the 2010 review conference of the parties to the NPT. The conference final document noted "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and reaffirmed "the need for all states at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law."

This was followed by a resolution by the council of delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in November 2011, strongly appealing to all states "to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement."

Subsequently, at the first session of the preparatory committee for the 2015 NPT review conference held in May 2012, 16 countries led by Norway and Switzerland issued a joint statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament, stating that "it is of great concern that, even after the end of the Cold War, the threat of nuclear annihilation remains part of the 21st century international security environment."

Catastrophic humanitarian consequences

Observers agree that this should initiate serious consideration of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, which were highlighted at the Oslo conference:

"In the event of a sudden humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation, it is unlikely that any state or international body has the means to respond in an adequate manner and be able to provide sufficient assistance to those affected. Moreover, it might not be possible to establish such capacity, even if attempts were made.

"The effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, irrespective of cause, will not be constrained by national borders, and will affect states and people in significant ways, regionally as well as globally."

These and equally atrocious consequences of a possible human error call for the global civil society to play a pivotal role in concerted efforts towards ushering in a nuclear weapons free world, said Kimiaki Kawai, SGI Program Director for Peace Affairs in a presentation at Palais des Nations in Geneva on April 26, 2013.

The consequences of human error have been spelt out by David Krieger, founder-president of [Nuclear Age Peace Foundation](#): "While a nuclear war is not likely, it is possible and could occur by accident, miscalculation or design. Just as the large-scale radiation releases from the accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant seemed unlikely until they occurred, the possibility of nuclear war also may seem unlikely until deterrence fails and it occurs....One thing we know about humans is that we are fallible. We are not capable of perfection and we cannot eliminate human error altogether no matter how diligently we try. Human fallibility and nuclear weapons are a highly volatile mix."

However Krieger guards against despair. "Despair is a recipe for giving up but hope is a choice. We can choose hope," he said in a presentation at UNOG, and pleaded for "boldness and hope" with a view to ushering in a nuke-free world.

Hope, not despair, characterises an overwhelming majority of the young people surveyed by the SGI youth members. Nobuyuki Asai, chair of Soka Gakkai Youth Peace Conference and coordinator of the survey, said: "It is encouraging that so many youth recognize the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons. We will continue raising awareness among youth concerning nuclear weapons and the gravity of the threat they pose." [IDN-InDepthNews – April 30, 2013]

Picture: SGI Youth in exchange meeting | Credit: SGI



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Civil Society Raises Pressure Over NPT

By RAVI KANTH DEVARAKONDA



GENEVA (IPS) - As parties to the treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) begin their second preparatory conference in Geneva on Monday, representatives of civil society and several countries have decided to bring the festering nuclear issue and its potential humanitarian consequences to the centre stage.

“The NPT has its own process and business as usual,” said Rebecca Johnson, co-chair for the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a Geneva-based global coalition of pressure groups working on disarmament and a ban on nuclear weapons.

The Geneva preparatory committee meeting will focus on a range of issues for the next two weeks to prepare the agenda for the 2015 Review Conference which will take place in Geneva.

More importantly, it is taking place against the backdrop of rising nuclear tensions in the Korean peninsula and Iran’s nuclear enrichment programme. Also, several countries held an international conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear weapons in Oslo last month.

“My hope is that a large number of countries talk (at the Geneva meeting) about the importance of bringing the nuclear issue back to human level and understanding the humanitarian consequences because of nuclear weapons,” Johnson told IPS.

She expects that a large number of parties to the NPT will sign up to the South African statement on the human dimension of nuclear weapons which will be delivered at the meeting.

“We want a sustained dialogue on the humanitarian impact so that it changes the balance of power in the NPT,” Johnson argued.

The NPT came into force in 1970 with the avowed goal of stopping countries from building a nuclear bomb. So far, 189 countries have ratified the treaty while India, Israel, and Pakistan refused to become parties to it. All three countries possess a nuclear arsenal, with total estimates varying from 50 to 200 nuclear weapons.

The official nuclear weapon states – the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and China who are known as P5 – are required to implement measures under the treaty to “cessation” of the nuclear arms race, and complete nuclear “disarmament”.

The five nuclear weapon states held a meeting last week during which they discussed promoting dialogue and mutual confidence on nuclear issues. The P5 members exchanged views on various issues concerning “non-proliferation”, “the peaceful uses of nuclear energy”, and “disarmament” – known as the three pillars of the NPT. The five nations, who are the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, reaffirmed their commitment to the goal of nuclear disarmament.

However, progress on nuclear disarmament is almost limited or negligible over the last 45 years. “There is not much progress on nuclear disarmament and we need a new dynamic to break the paralysis, otherwise there will be new cold war,” said Martin Hinrichs, an ICAN activist. Representatives of ICAN from some 16 countries held a brainstorming session on how to go about their advocacy campaign during the NPT meeting this week.

“They (the P5) have got a vested interest and they constructed their industry, defence industries, and military to deploy, to possess, and to modernise nuclear weapons,” said Johnson.

The P5 members, says Johnson, “have a vested interest in keeping the status quo and stopping new countries entering the nuclear club.” Besides, they enjoy numerous privileges because of their status and it would be a mistake to think that they would implement substantive measures towards complete nuclear disarmament, she said. ➔



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So, the “game” for the elimination of nuclear weapons will not start from the P5 side who wield powerful nuclear weapons, Johnson said.

“What has to change is that the non-nuclear states have to start things to bring about nuclear disarmament,” the ICAN co-chair argued. “They (the non-nuclear weapon states) have the power and tools to change by becoming aware that nuclear weapons are a humanitarian problem even if they are set in the international legal and political rules.”

Therefore, it is important not to give exalted status to the nuclear arms states every time on the hope that they would carry out disarmament. “The non-nuclear weapon states are not supplicants, and they have to engage in politics and change international relations by joining forces with civil society,” Johnson asserted.

The international ban movement intends to delegitimise nuclear weapons for everybody so that countries are dissuaded from spending billions of dollars on nuclear weapons. [IPS | April 21, 2013]

From Non-Proliferation to a Total Ban on Nukes

By TIM WRIGHT*

MELBOURNE (IDN) - At the beginning of March, the Norwegian government hosted a landmark [conference in Oslo](#) on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the inability of relief agencies to respond effectively in the event of a nuclear attack. More than 120 governments, the Red Cross and several UN agencies participated. Their message came through loud and clear: the only way to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again is to outlaw and eliminate them without further delay.

This unprecedented gathering of diplomats, experts and civil society actors was part of a new humanitarian-based approach to nuclear disarmament, which evolved out of the final document adopted in 2010 at the [Non-Proliferation Treaty \(NPT\) review conference](#). There, the 189 parties to the treaty – including nuclear-armed Russia, the United States, Britain, China and France – had expressed their “deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons”.

The [NPT parties meet again in Geneva](#) from April 22 to May 3, 2013 to prepare the ground for the 2015 review conference. Those that are genuinely interested in advancing the nuclear disarmament agenda will view this meeting as an opportunity to build on the momentum generated in Oslo, and to garner support for the follow-up conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons to be hosted by Mexico later this year or early in 2014. Many governments will also call for negotiations to begin on a universal treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons.

The governments of Norway, Switzerland, Austria, South Africa and Mexico, among others, have been vocal in their support for a humanitarian-based approach to nuclear disarmament, arguing that the catastrophic effects of nuclear weapons on our health, societies and the environment should be at the centre of all debates about these weapons. The global [Red Cross and Red Crescent movement](#) and the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#) have also sought to emphasize the humanitarian impact.

Remarkably, the Oslo conference was the first time in the 68-year history of the nuclear age that governments had come together to address the problem of nuclear weapons purely through a humanitarian lens. Disarmament and non-proliferation discussions have traditionally focused on geopolitical and national security concerns. But as the processes that led to bans on landmines and cluster munitions demonstrated, adopting a humanitarian discourse is an important first step: new political coalitions can be formed and longstanding deadlocks overcome. ☺



*Tim Wright is Australian Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (www.icanw.org).



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Disarmament diplomacy

Of the nine nuclear-armed states, only two – India and Pakistan – attended the Oslo conference. The permanent five members of the UN Security Council jointly boycotted the meeting, claiming that an emphasis on humanitarian consequences somehow diverted attention from the existing "step-by-step approach" to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. But multilateral treaty negotiations to advance a nuclear-weapon-free world have been at a standstill for more than a decade and a half. The last major accomplishment in this field was the [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty](#) in 1996, which has still not entered into force.

Today the negotiating priority for the Geneva-based [Conference on Disarmament](#) – often described as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum – is a treaty to ban the production of fissile materials for weapons (although this is a non-proliferation measure, not a disarmament measure). In general, the nuclear-armed states have been unwilling to make legally binding commitments to reduce their nuclear arsenals. However, Russia and the United States have agreed bilaterally to limit the number of deployed nuclear warheads in their forces.

The NPT review meetings remain the main diplomatic forum for disarmament and non-proliferation discussions, despite four of the nine nuclear-armed states not being involved – India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. The other five nuclear states have consistently refused to accept any timelines in relation to meeting their Article VI disarmament obligations. While paying lip service to the idea of a "world without nuclear weapons", they invest tens of billions of dollars modernizing their nuclear forces with the clear intention of retaining them for many decades to come.

Towards a universal ban

The [Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) prohibits the 184 states parties without nuclear weapons from ever acquiring the bomb. In this sense, the treaty serves as a partial ban on nuclear weapons, complemented by several regional nuclear-weapon-free zones. However, the NPT does not expressly prohibit the use of nuclear weapons, nor their possession by the P5 nuclear-weapon states. Rather, it imposes an obligation on all states to pursue negotiations in good faith for nuclear disarmament.

Despite this disarmament provision, the nuclear-weapon states promote the view that retaining and modernizing their nuclear forces is entirely legitimate. They describe the attainment of a nuclear-weapon-free world as a centuries-long proposition. The negotiation of a nuclear weapons ban treaty – led by non-nuclear-weapon states – would powerfully challenge this status quo. It would delegitimize nuclear weapons for all states and help speed up the disarmament process.

Even without the support of the nuclear-weapon states, the benefits of a ban would be considerable. For example, it would strengthen the case against British renewal of its nuclear-armed submarines. It would put pressure on the five NATO states that host US nuclear weapons – Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey – to end this practice. It would force countries such as Australia and Japan to rethink their participation in extended nuclear deterrence. And it would encourage banks around the world to stop financing companies that manufacture nuclear arms.

Conventions already exist to prohibit chemical and biological weapons, anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions. All of these treaties have been influential in greatly reducing the stockpiles of such weapons. It is beyond time that nuclear weapons be prohibited also. As the Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu remarked during the Oslo conference, "nuclear weapons are abhorrent and a grave danger no matter who possesses them ... threatening a city with radioactive incineration is intolerable no matter the nationality or religion of its inhabitants."

[IDN-InDepthNews – April 20, 2013]



ICAN has 300 partners in 70 countries



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Translations

Youth Holds Out Hope For Banning Nukes

Arabic Text Version http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=930:youth-hold-out-hope-for-banning-nukes-arabic&catid=3:idsn-arabic&Itemid=4

Arabic Pdf Version

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=931:pdf&catid=3:idsn-arabic&Itemid=4

باب ال عال م ي أهل ناي حظر ال س لحة ال زووي شة

ك بته ارم شي رواج / دنيايبت زيو

برلني/جنيف) دنيايبت وينز (- لوانكن لاؤرار بيد لائلاب، مثل إعلان جم عي حلسلاة لازووية زخلالوة ني لائرسانات لاعلمية على أزا حلساة لا إلسوية، مئلو أيضا وضع ويننيذ معهدلة لماشة رطل هذه حلسلاة. هه دي لازوية ي تلا نوصلت إليها رداة دولية صدرت من مكتب الأمم المتحدة ني جنيف رخؤمًا.

نئين لادسارة ي تلا جأراه ش ببا منظمة "سوكا اعكاي لادوية"، أن سبة 2.9.9 ني لامية من ال فاد الذين نئراوح هوامعأم بين 1. لإى 51 اعماً وإسبنش ارنم الدراسة، يعبورن أن ال س لحة الزووية غير إلسوية، ني حين أعرب 08.08 ني لامية منم عن دعمهم ولضع ويننيذ معاقده لاعلمية رطل فاكة لساحة الدمار اشامل.

German http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=932:altersgruppe-der-15-bis-45-jaehrigen-fuer-atomwaffenverbot-&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

Japanese Text Version

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=938:youth-hold-out-hope-for-banning-nukes-japanese-&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

Japanese Pdf Version

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=936:pdf&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

Norwegian http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=937:ungdommen-holder-pa-hapet-for-bannlysing-av-atomvapen-&catid=11:norwegian-swedish&Itemid=12

Spanish http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=941:la-juventud-sostiene-la-esperanza-para-prohibir-la-nuclearizacion&catid=10:spanish&Itemid=11

Civil Society Raises Pressure Over NPT

Japanese Text Version http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=925:civil-society-raises-pressure-over-npt-japanese&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

Japanese Pdf Version

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=926:pdf&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

From Non-Proliferation To A Total Ban On Nukes

German http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=924:von-der-nuklearen-nichtverbreitung-zum-kompletten-atomwaffenverbot-&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

Japanese Text Version http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=922:from-non-proliferation-to-a-total-ban-on-nukes&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

Japanese pdf version

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=923:pdf&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3



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What Others Say

Calling For a Nuclear Weapons Convention

By FREDERICK N. MATTIS*



ANNAPOLIS, USA - Soka Gakkai International ([SGI](#)) President Daisaku Ikeda's [Peace Proposal](#) for 2013 notes that worldwide abolition of nuclear weapons will require the legal framework of a treaty banning the weapons (variously called a nuclear abolition treaty, nuclear ban treaty, or Nuclear Weapons Convention – NWC). The SGI president proposes the goal of substantial completion in 2015 of the NWC text. Upon its finalization, then, of course, time will be needed for states to evaluate, sign, ratify, and formally accede to the NWC.

As Tim Wright of International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons has pointed out ([op-ed](#), March 27, [Truth-out.org](#)), mere introduction of the Nuclear Weapons Convention for states' signature will be a boost for the nuclear abolition movement. Suddenly, abolition will be a reachable prospect, and thus states that maintain nuclear weapons will find themselves more subject to scrutiny and skepticism about their arsenals. Also, if nuclear states point to geopolitical insecurities as the basis for their arsenals, the existence of the [prospective] nuclear ban will bring added internal and external support for such states to undertake more consistent, and higher-level, negotiations on the matters in question.

Can the drafting period, probably by an ad hoc group of states, be relatively short for the NWC, even though its subject – worldwide elimination of nuclear weapons – is so portentous? Most likely, yes, in part because of labors of diplomats and others on prior treaties such as the current (1967) nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the 1987 Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, START agreements, and the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The latter is particularly instructive for the Nuclear Weapons Convention, with the CWC's verification provisions (including “challenge inspections”), administrative bodies, and detailed lists of prohibited and restricted chemicals.

In addition, existence of the “Model Nuclear Weapons Convention” (1997, rev. 2007) is felicitous for the cause of nuclear abolition. The Model Convention (MNWC) was drafted by 50 volunteers: lawyers, engineers, scientist, physicians, and consultants. Its structure is similar, wisely, to the groundbreaking Chemical Weapons Convention, but with various adaptations and additional provisions pertinent to nuclear weapons. The MNWC will likely reduce (by my estimate) up to 80 percent the amount of time that would otherwise be required to complete the NWC text, once states sit down to negotiate an actual ban. (See link to MNWC at <http://www.lcnp.org>.)

SGI President Ikeda notes in his 2013 Peace Proposal that “The SGI's efforts to grapple with the nuclear weapons issue are based on the recognition that the very existence of these weapons represents the ultimate negation of the dignity of life.” States such as the USA and Britain, for their part, often say that they will maintain nuclear weapons as long as they exist anywhere else on earth; but the fully enacted NWC will eliminate all nuclear weapons. Until abolition is achieved, states (and especially today's nuclear powers) will continue to face the following dangers: nuclear war or nuclear attack, “false-alarm” nuclear missile launch, terrorist acquisition of a weapon from a state's nuclear arsenal, and regional conflagration (nuclear or otherwise) if a fear-driven, “pre-emptive” attack on nuclear facilities is carried out.

Keeping in view that enabling the nuclear weapon states to join the ban is the biggest challenge to nuclear abolition, following are some recommended provisions for the NWC, and their rationale.

1. Unanimity of accession by states to the NWC must be achieved before its entry into force, and the NWC declares that it applies “everywhere” (to cover non-state and any “ambiguous” areas)... Unless unanimity is required for entry into force, some at least of today's nuclear weapon states probably will not join the nuclear ban; and if unanimity is required, the enacted ban will have unprecedented geopolitical force. ➡

*Frederick N. Mattis is author of *Banning Weapons of Mass Destruction*, pub. ABC-Clio/Praeger Security International.



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What Others Say

2. States must join today's bans on chemical and biological weapons (1993 CWC and 1972 BWC) before signing the NWC... In a world where all states are poised to ban nuclear weapons, there is no reason to tolerate chem-bio weapons (which most states, including the USA and Russia, have already officially renounced by joining the CWC and BWC). Also: unless CWC/BWC accession by all states is indeed required before signing the nuclear ban (and for its entry into force, after all states join), some states—as one example, Israel—likely would not sign the nuclear ban.

3. Under the worldwide NWC, the actual weapons (warhead) elimination period does not begin until after states mutually approve of all states' nuclear ban domestic (national) implementing legislation (to ensure that such legislation does not undermine the ban), plus mutually approve of fellow states' level of cooperation in providing treaty-required declarations of nuclear weapons, facilities, and materials, with this including cooperation in baseline, achievable verification of the declarations by international nuclear ban inspectors... This provision is likely necessary for today's nuclear weapon states because they may be somewhat "wary" about abolition even as the ban's initial major steps unfold (i.e., states' enactment of suitable implementing legislation, and then states' nuclear declarations and their baseline verification). If it should happen that some state flouted its treaty obligations (on one of these crucial, initial treaty "roll-out" aspects), the treaty's progress could be halted by a state and would not proceed to its essence (nuclear warhead elimination) until the situation is rectified.

4. Warhead elimination [over posited 3.5 years] commences with Russia or the USA, whichever has more warheads, eliminating enough of them over six months to reach the other's initial (lower) level – after which point both continue reducing, following the treaty's timetable for warhead elimination. Also, and starting from that point when Russia and the USA are first "equal" (six months into elimination period): all other nuclear possessors eliminate 25 percent of their arsenals within 90 days; but thereafter they can "wait" until Russia and the USA in tandem reach the other states' varying, much lower [and 25-percent reduced] levels, at which times they join the USA and Russia in further reductions leading to all states simultaneously reaching zero. This provision is intended to be a workable compromise for, on the one hand, Russia and the USA with their multi-thousand warhead arsenals, and also for the other nuclear possessors with their many fewer. [IDN-InDepthNews – April 6, 2013]

A Rational Approach To Managing Nuclear Weapons: Deterrence

By WALTER PINCUS*

Is the United States entering a period in which it has to learn to live with "the bomb," as in the spread of nuclear weapons? Compare the apparent contradiction between the way Washington is dealing with North Korea and Iran and the effect this could have on other countries.

North Korea not only has the capability to produce nuclear weapons (it has conducted three underground tests), but it has also stated an intention to build them. At last month's plenary meeting of the North Korean Central Committee of the Workers' Party, "a new strategic line was laid down on simultaneously pushing forward economic construction and the building of nuclear-armed forces," said a spokesman for North Korea's General Department of Atomic Energy.

In April 2009, Pyongyang threw out inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency. Since then there has been no monitoring of those facilities. North Korea has been subjected to increasing economic sanctions, but those efforts have not slowed its progress toward a deliverable nuclear weapon.

Yet I haven't heard any official in Washington, Seoul, Tokyo or Beijing talk about attacking reactors at Yongbyon, where plutonium or uranium are being refined — or any secret facilities that may be making highly enriched uranium. ☹



*Walter Pincus reports on intelligence, defense and foreign policy for The Washington Post. He first came to the paper in 1966 and has covered numerous subjects, including nuclear weapons and arms control, politics and congressional investigations. He was among Post reporters awarded the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting. Among many other honors were the 1977 George Polk Award for articles exposing the neutron warhead, a 1981 Emmy from writing a CBS documentary on strategic nuclear weapons, and most recently the 2010 Arthur Ross Award from the American Academy for Diplomacy for columns on foreign policy.



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Meanwhile, Israel and the United States have threatened military action against Iran should Tehran move toward building a nuclear weapon. Israel's red line is Iran developing the capability to produce highly enriched uranium at its two major facilities at Natanz and Fordow. Both are being visited by IAEA inspectors who report on the level of enrichment being achieved.

The inspections provide the United States and Israel some early warning should Iran suddenly try to break out and produce weapons-grade material. Another tipoff: if Iran told the IAEA to leave.

And although North Korean verbal threats are treated as bluster because they don't appear to be supported with military action, Iran is seen as an "existential threat." and its repeated claims that it doesn't want to build nuclear weapons are dismissed as lies.

Several truths are not being discussed in all of this.

The first is that most people in Iran and North Korea want the prestige that goes with nuclear weapons, although most are paying an economic price. Notice that North Korea's youthful new leader tied the determination to build nuclear-armed forces with "pushing forward economic construction."

What most Americans don't know is that North Korea first sought help from the Soviet Union for a nuclear reactor after the United States threatened to use its nuclear weapons to end the Korean War. Soon after, Pyongyang learned that U.S. nuclear bombs and artillery shells had been stored at bases in South Korea — and the desire for their own weapons increased.

Having nuclear weapons is a popular political issue in Iran. Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi began the nuclear power program with technology and highly enriched uranium provided by the United States for a research reactor. He also had in mind gaining technology for producing a bomb. When the shah was deposed in 1979, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini ordered an end to Iran's nuclear programs.

Ironically, it was U.S. claims that Iraq, Tehran's enemy, was developing nuclear weapons that led Khomeini to restart his country's program in 1984. Today, Iran's neighbors — Russia, India and Pakistan — have nuclear weapons, as do its prime enemies, Israel and the United States.

No wonder the nuclear program appeals to Iranian national pride. In 2009, when President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad tried to calm the United States and other Western countries by appearing to negotiate the future of the nation's nuclear program, his most vocal opposition came from Iran's Green Movement leaders, who had worked against his election and feared he would give away too much.

Today there is growing talk in South Korea that the United States should return its tactical nuclear weapons, which were withdrawn in 1991, or that Seoul should develop its own nuclear deterrent.

Even Japan has some legislators talking about dispensing with their longtime principles that bar the possession, manufacture or storage of nuclear weapons on Japanese soil. Shinzo Abe, Japan's new prime minister, has said that the country's constitution does not preclude the acquisition of nuclear weapons for tactical defense.

Perhaps it's time for the United States to at least discuss this possible new reality: No nation, not even the powerful United States, can threaten strong enough economic sanctions or military action against any country whose leaders and public want to build nuclear weapons.

Take the view of Stanford professor Sigfried Hecker, a director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory from 1986 to 1997, who has visited North Korea seven times. He was the person who announced in November 2010 that the Kim Jong Il regime had built a state-of-the-art uranium enrichment facility.

On Tuesday, Hecker said in an interview posted on Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation Web site that North Korea "has a bomb but not yet much of an arsenal." He said Pyongyang "lacks fissile materials, plutonium or highly enriched uranium to fuel its bombs" and it is for that reason it is threatening to restart its old plutonium reactor and increase the capacity of its uranium enrichment facility. ➔



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Given that circumstance, the United States should focus on trying to dissuade the North Koreans from producing more fissile material, rather than trying to get them to totally give up nuclear weapons. The United States should work toward Pyongyang having “no more bombs, no better bombs and no export,” Hecker said.

“Why would the regime want to launch a nuclear attack when it fully knows that any use of nuclear weapons would result in a devastating military response and would spell the end of the regime?”

That’s deterrence, which worked during the Cold War and I believe will continue to work no matter who has a nuclear weapon, North Korea, Iran, or any other country.

Nations ultimately will have to see this is the only rational way to proceed. [Washington Post - April 4, 2013]

Defusing The Nuclear Powder Keg

By JAYANTHA DHANAPALA*

If our cricket-crazy South Asian subcontinent knows the Sri Lankan hill-country town of Pallekelle — in the suburbs of my hometown of Kandy — for anything, it is for the Pallekelle International Cricket Stadium here where some of the 2011 World Cup Cricket matches were played.

However, Pallekelle is also home to another, more inconspicuous but no less important complex: a monitoring station to detect nuclear explosions. It is a part of an unprecedented global alarm system built by the Vienna-based Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO).

Over 300 state-of-the-art sensors in every corner of the world listen to the atmosphere, the oceans and underground for shock waves from a nuclear blast. Radionuclide stations sniff the air for radioactivity — the “smoking gun” of any nuclear test. Thanks to the most elaborate verification system in the history of arms control, which is now nearing completion, the international community can rest assured that any nuclear test will be detected.

Although the CTBTO celebrates its 15th birthday this year and has come a long way in establishing its formidable verification system, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has yet to become global law. This is one of the main reasons why, in my presence on January 10 in Washington D.C. this year, the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists decided to adjust the hands of its famous “Doomsday Clock” — a symbolic measure which counts down to nuclear Armageddon — one minute closer to midnight: it is now set at 11:55, five minutes before global disaster.

Veteran Nepalese diplomat Hira B. Thapa recently wrote about the looming danger of nuclear warfare in South Asia for his country. I share the same fears for Sri Lanka. The detonation, accidental or planned, of even a single nuclear weapon in this part of the world, would be catastrophic for the region. A nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan would cause a global nuclear winter leading to years of widespread famine, as Professors Alan Robock from Rutgers University and Owen Brian Toon from the University of Colorado, United States, predicted.

Only eight specific ratifications are missing for the CTBT to enter into force: the U.S., China, Iran, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Israel, and North Korea. In February 2012, Indonesia decided to leave this group and join the 156 countries that had already ratified the CTBT while the Obama Administration has pledged to resubmit the treaty to the U.S. Senate for advice and consent.

Since its inception in 1996, the CTBT's zero-testing norm is the expression of a zero-tolerance stance against nuclear testing, treated nowadays as a reckless and atavistic display of nuclear weapon possession. It is my hope that other countries in the wider Asian region will follow Indonesia's shining example. ☺

*Jayantha Dhanapala is currently President of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs. He was United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs from 1998 to 2003 and Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the United States from 1995 to 1997.



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The non-nuclear weapon States in our region could make a difference by leading through example: among the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), only Brunei, Myanmar and Thailand have yet to ratify the CTBT. The ASEAN countries are also members of the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone (Treaty of Bangkok), which itself prohibits nuclear tests. Full regional membership of the Treaty of Bangkok and the CTBT are important steps in establishing South-East Asia as a nuclear weapon-free bastion of stability. In the wider region, the only countries that have yet to ratify the CTBT are Papua New Guinea, Timor-Leste, Nepal, and my own country, Sri Lanka. Taking this decisive step would put the nuclear weapon possessors and the remaining eight CTBT hold-outs in the spotlight.

All these countries are parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States and active members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). For NAM, nuclear disarmament has been a core value since its inception in 1961. Over the decades it has pushed incessantly, and vigorously, for a global ban on nuclear weapons and nuclear tests alike and has supported the CTBT.

Ratifying the CTBT is not only a matter of principle. It is not only about supporting world peace and the environment. It is in our security interests. Indonesia has shown the way — now it is up to other countries to follow suit. Each additional ratification sends a clear political signal to the remaining hold-out States. The saga for the banning of all nuclear tests began in 1954 with a great visionary leader from Asia — Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It would be a tragic irony for Asian nations to be an obstacle now when that goal is within sight. [The Hindu – April 4/5, 2013]

Good Faith

By RICK WAYMAN

A new paper** by Judge Christopher G. Weeramantry looks deeply at the concept of good faith, an extremely important concept included in Article VI of the NPT and a central principle of international law. Judge Weeramantry, who served as Vice President of the International Court of Justice when it ruled on the illegality of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in 1996, is uniquely qualified to address this topic.

The Court reinforced the importance of good faith in 1996 when it pronounced: “There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.” According to Weeramantry, “No higher legal pronouncement on a question of international law is possible than the unanimous opinion of the world’s highest court. No greater issue can come to a court than one involving the survival of humanity. No more all-embracing and respected concept exists in international law than the concept of good faith. The obligation spelled out by the Court straddled all these aspects of fundamental importance.”

Modernization of nuclear weapons and delivery systems, comprehensively detailed in Reaching Critical Will’s report Still Assuring Destruction Forever, brings front and center the concept of good faith. Weeramantry does not mince words when he identifies these modernization programs as breach of good faith. He asks readers to consider whether “there has been not merely a violation of good faith but an actual manifestation of bad faith in this matter.”

This breach of good faith through modernization programs is a shameful endless circle, with one country’s actions prompting the other nuclear powers to do likewise, escalating the level of departures from the duty of good faith. Such action has also, according to Weeramantry, prompted non-nuclear powers to seek to acquire nuclear weapons.

In the context of the NPT, good faith would start with an immediate halt to the modernization of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Good faith efforts must continue until the obligation of nuclear disarmament is achieved. As Judge Weeramantry concludes, “There can be no basis for the disregard or incomplete performance of an obligation so deeply ingrained in international law, so clearly undertaken by the nuclear powers, so carefully pronounced by the International Court of Justice and so definitely determining whether humanity will flourish or perish.” [NPT News in Review – April 23, 2013]

*Rick Wayman is the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation's Director of Programs and Operations.

***The Nuclear Age Peace Foundation’s briefing paper by Judge Weeramantry, Good Faith: Essential to Nuclear Disarmament and Human Survival, is available online at www.wagingpeace.org/goto/goodfaith*



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Nukes Indefensible on Humanitarian Grounds

By HIROTSUGU TERASAKI*

TOKYO - It is a cause of grave concern that there are an increasing number of regions under tension and exposed to the threat of nuclear weapons; namely, the Middle East, South Asia and Northeast Asia. Today, there are more countries that seem to be adhering to the doctrine of nuclear deterrence and/or extended deterrence than during the Cold War era.

This reminds me of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's warning to the world, "Unfortunately, the doctrine of nuclear deterrence has proven to be contagious. This has made non-proliferation more difficult, which in turn raises new risks that nuclear weapons will be used." It is critical that all of us share an awareness that humanity is standing at an important tipping point today.

There is a growing cognitive gap between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states on the role of nuclear weapons in national defence. Daisaku Ikeda, president of SGI, [points out](#): "Unless we confront the fundamental source of that contagion, moves to prevent proliferation will be neither convincing nor effective."

I would like to hereby stress that the logic of nuclear deterrence is no longer justifiable, as no state should pursue its own security interests at the risk of holding the world's population hostage to nuclear ambitions. As a step to stop the further "contagion" of nuclear deterrence, I urge all state parties to the NPT to confirm this point during the upcoming second NPT PrepCom in Geneva.

Risks of nuclear proliferation, terror and accidents continue to jeopardize our lives. Hiroshima and Nagasaki have taught us that any use of nuclear weapons would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. This point should never be forgotten. At the same time, the huge economic burden of nuclear weapons spending is what the world can no longer afford to ignore. We need to ask ourselves whether these risks, effects and costs of nuclear weapons can continue to justify nuclear arms. Is the value of nuclear deterrence justifiable in the face of these negative consequences?

An emerging approach supported by non-nuclear-weapon states sheds light on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Greater humanitarian focus and renewed awareness of the fundamental nature and consequences of these arsenals could alter the discourse and normative questions asked. The challenge facing the nuclear-weapon states is how well they can grasp these humanitarian concerns into their nuclear calculations.

It is therefore vital to galvanize the voices of the citizens around the world to question the humanitarian acceptability of these weapons especially in the nuclear-weapon states. We need to give greater space for "the common sense" of citizens questioning the utility of nuclear weapons in order to rid the world of these apocalyptic arsenals. Let us recall what US President Obama declared in 2009 in Prague: "So today, I state clearly and with conviction America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons . . . But now we, too, must ignore the voices who tell us that the world cannot change. We have to insist, 'Yes, we can.'"

Can we allow the nuclear-weapon states to remain complacent about nuclear deterrence? The answer to this rhetorical question is clearly "no" and the reason why is, as President Obama stated, because they are completely unjustifiable on humanitarian grounds irrespective of any political justifications.

We must redouble our efforts to resolutely push the state actors to see nuclear weapons use through a humanitarian lens. Regardless of how low the probability of a nuclear weapons detonation may seem to the nuclear strategists, the consequence is still extremely high in humanitarian terms. [IDN-InDepthNews – April 26, 2013]

*Hirotsugu Terasaki is Vice President, Soka Gakkai and Executive Director, [Soka Gakkai International](#) Peace Affairs. He issued this statement in run-up to the [NPT PrepCom](#) from April 22 to May 3, 2013 in Geneva.





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74 NPT States Issue Humanitarian Appeal For Abolition

By JOHN LORETZ

The number of countries demanding the elimination of nuclear weapons as a humanitarian imperative grew to 74 today, when South Africa read a joint statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons on behalf of that many delegations to the 2013 Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee in Geneva.

Declaring that “our countries are deeply concerned about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons,” the States criticized the NPT for ignoring its very reason for existence “for many years,” even though “the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has increasingly been recognised as a fundamental and global concern that must be at the core of all deliberations on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation.”

Noting the importance of both the 2011 resolution of the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the international Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo last month, the joint statement concluded that

It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances....The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination.”

No nuclear-weapon state signed the statement—no surprise there. What might raise some eyebrows is that four NATO countries—Denmark, Iceland, Luxembourg, and Norway—did sign, despite the fact that they are members of a major nuclear alliance with the United States. Some other States that participate in extended nuclear deterrence arrangements with the US—Japan, the Republic of Korea, and Australia, for example—were also among the missing.

In today’s issue of the daily newsletter published by Reaching Critical Will during NPT meetings, Ray Acheson reports that the NPT nuclear-weapon states appear to be rattled by all this talk about humanitarian consequences. “They say that these consequences are so well known there is no longer any point in discussing them.” Unfortunately for them, according to Ray, “the majority of other delegations do want to talk about it” [emphasis hardly needs to be added].

The States signing onto this new appeal (not all of them yet listed on the printed version posted to the RCW website) are: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belarus, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cyprus, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Holy See, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Singapore, South Africa, Swaziland, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, Yemen and Zambia.

In May 2012, the first joint statement on humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons was issued by 16 States at the first NPT PrepCom in this review cycle. By October, another 19 had joined them in reissuing the appeal at the UN General Assembly. Now the number is in the mid seventies. It should be even higher by the time of the followup conference to Oslo, expected to be held in Mexico early next year. At this rate, the nuclear-weapon states should be very isolated, very soon. Perhaps it’s time they consider boarding the train to a nuclear-weapons-free world?

[IPPNW – April 24, 2013]

Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference
of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
Joint Statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons
Delivered by Ambassador Abdul Samad Minty, Permanent Representative of South Africa
to the United Nations at Geneva, 24 April 2013

Visit ➞ <http://www.ippnw.org/pdf/2013-joint-statement-to-UN-April.pdf>



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David Cameron Promotes Nuclear Proliferation

[CND - Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament - April 4, 2013] David Cameron's [comments on Trident today](#) are 'promoting a logic of proliferation' the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has said. Despite the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty preparatory committee convening in just two weeks' time, David Cameron is backing Britain's nuclear rearmament, rather than international disarmament efforts. He said 'a world without nuclear weapons is a fine ideal...' but then followed it up with: 'I am determined that we will maintain [nuclear weapons] for generations to come.'

CND General Secretary, Kate Hudson stated:

'Cameron is using the spectre of a nuclear-armed North Korea as a justification for British nuclear rearmament. Any further development of nuclear weapons, by any state, is alarming, including by Britain. It is vital that the international community moves to deal with the problem of nuclear weapons once and for all.'

'But this cannot be done by saying that we and a select group can have nuclear weapons - and engage in aggressive military actions around the world - and that others can't. North Korea withdrew from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty when President Bush named it as part of the Axis of Evil, claiming that it needed its own nuclear deterrent to protect it from US attack, having seen what happened to Iraq.'

'This is exactly the same logic as Cameron's. If we say that replacing Trident is vital to protect us, for our national security - other states will come to the same conclusion. And that's the logic David Cameron is promoting: a logic of proliferation.'

'The result of David Cameron's drive to replace Trident will not just be a nuclear North Korea - but many more nuclear armed states.' □

UK 'Cannot Afford' To Let Global Nuclear Disarmament Initiatives Fail

[CND - April 19, 2013] Momentum is gathering for global nuclear disarmament initiatives. And as states gather in Geneva next week at the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty's Preparatory Committee, the UK 'cannot afford to sit on the fence', the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament has said.

Despite the British Government's stated commitment to multilateral disarmament initiatives, it pointedly failed to attend a major conference in Oslo last month on the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear blast - despite Defence Secretary Philip Hammond being in Norway that week to oversee a military exercise. MPs are calling on the government to commit to attending a follow-up conference in Mexico.

As we approach the NPT Prepcom next week (22 April - 3 May), CND urges the UK government to live up to its word on a commitment to a nuclear weapons-free world.

CND will host a meeting in Geneva on Monday 22 April entitled 'Scrap Trident: Political Perspectives on Disarmament'. Speakers include former Defence Minister Sir Nick Harvey MP, Member of the Scottish Parliament Bill Kidd, Labour MP Jeremy Corbyn, Rebecca Johnson (ICAN-UK) and CND's General Secretary Kate Hudson.

Hudson stated: 'Recent tensions in the Korean Peninsula, as well as the faltering progress on a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone in the Middle East, make clear that the UK cannot afford to sit on the fence when it comes to global disarmament initiatives. Rather, the British government should be throwing its weight behind such endeavours - not equivocating or snubbing them as it did with the Oslo conference.'

'Prime Minister David Cameron's recent statements on nuclear proliferation undermine the government's supposed commitment to global disarmament. Cameron stated that 'a world without nuclear weapons is a fine ideal...' but said that he is 'determined that we will maintain [nuclear weapons] for generations to come.'

'This just won't wash. The British Government can choose Cameron's disastrous logic of proliferation, or it can genuinely work towards limiting and abolishing these catastrophic weapons.' □



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Swedish FM Attacks Signatories Of Humanitarian Initiative



The Swedish Foreign Minister (and former Prime Minister) Carl Bildt has found himself in hot water after his curious comments on a radio show in response to questions over Sweden's refusal to recognize the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons at the committee of state parties to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty this past April (NPT PrepCom).

The Swedish government has been criticized for neglecting to join 80 other countries – including its Scandinavian neighbours Norway, Denmark and Iceland – in signing a joint statement put forth by South Africa which recognized and called for an increased focus on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in nuclear disarmament discussions.

In an impromptu call to a morning radio show, Bildt fanned the flames by dismissing the statement as “no big deal” and the 80 co-sponsors as “not really serious states”, even going so far as to label the humanitarian arguments in favour of nuclear disarmament as a “side-track” that “no serious states engage in”.

This might come as a surprise to the supporters of the statement, which, in addition to Norway, Denmark, Iceland, Austria and Switzerland, encompassed almost all of Latin America, including Brazil and Mexico, and a majority of African states. The humanitarian approach has also been supported by such organizations as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the UN (OCHA), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, who all emphasized the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons at a government conference in Oslo in March.

Bildt's apparent fixation on the “serious states” and the “serious approaches” to nuclear disarmament are indicative of his complicity in the stale approach to disarmament in which non-nuclear-armed states are sidelined and forced to wait and hope while the nuclear weapons agenda is fumbled over by the nuclear-armed states and their cohort.

What is perhaps not clear to Mr Bildt, but is to those who had their ear to the ground at the NPT PrepCom and have been watching the nuclear weapons debate over the last year, is that the ground is shifting. The widespread support for the joint statement reveals that more and more states are realizing that a different approach, in which non-nuclear armed states take the lead to propel the agenda towards a ban and the elimination of nuclear weapons, is urgently needed and is indeed gaining momentum.

The list of the 80 countries who signed the Humanitarian Initiative: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Belarus, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Cuba, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Holy See, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Serbia, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, Yemen, Zambia and South Africa. [<http://www.icanw.org/campaign-news/swedish-fm-attacks-80-state-signatories-of-humanitarian-initiative-not-serious-states/#.UYwr-srqln8>] □

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