



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH MAY 2013 ARTICLES

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In-Depth Reports

Nuclear Iran Unlikely to Tilt Regional Power Balance – Report



WASHINGTON - A nuclear-armed Iran would not pose a fundamental threat to the United States and its regional allies like Israel and the Gulf Arab monarchies, according to [a new report](#) released here on May 17 by the Rand Corporation. Entitled “Iran After the Bomb: How Would a Nuclear-Armed Tehran Behave?“, the report asserts that the acquisition by Tehran of nuclear weapons would above all be intended to deter an attack by hostile powers, presumably including Israel and the United States, rather than for aggressive purposes. ➤ Pages 2-3

U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arsenals Cling to Bygone Era



UNITED NATIONS - In the late 19th century, Russian playwright Anton Chekhov famously touted one golden rule for dramatic productions: if you show your audience a loaded gun in the first act, that gun must go off by the last. But Chekhov’s storytelling trope is troubling if applied to the world’s weapons technology today, which include an estimated 17,300 nukes – used primarily by nations as props to leverage international power. ➤ Pages 4-5

Nuclear Iran Can Be Contained and Deterred: Report



WASHINGTON - While preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is preferable, the United States could successfully contain a nuclear Iran, according to a [new report](#) released here Monday by the Center for a New American Security, an influential think tank close to the administration of President Barack Obama. ➤ Pages 6-7-8

UN Accused of Playing Down Nuke Disarmament Conference



UNITED NATIONS - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is one of the most vociferous advocates of a world free of nuclear weapons. “Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are not utopian ideals,” he says. ➤ Pages 8-9-10

'Don't Take Arabs' NPT Membership for Granted'

CAIRO - Not that nuclear issues are an actual source of concern to Egyptian citizens. They are deeply worried about their present and immediate future now that inter-religious violence is on the rise, triggering a dangerous, growing insecurity amidst an overwhelming popular discontent with President Mohamed Morsi’s regime. Simply put, there is too much frustration and deception here to think of nukes. ➤ Pages 11-12

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Nuclear Iran Unlikely to Tilt Regional Power Balance – Report

By JIM LOBE and JOE HITCHON



WASHINGTON (IPS) - A nuclear-armed Iran would not pose a fundamental threat to the United States and its regional allies like Israel and the Gulf Arab monarchies, according to [a new report](#) released here on May 17 by the Rand Corporation.

Entitled “Iran After the Bomb: How Would a Nuclear-Armed Tehran Behave?“, the report asserts that the acquisition by Tehran of nuclear weapons would above all be intended to deter an attack by hostile powers, presumably including Israel and the United States, rather than for aggressive purposes.

And while its acquisition may indeed lead to greater tension between Iran and its Sunni-led neighbours, the 50-page report concludes that Tehran would be unlikely to use nuclear weapons against other Muslim countries. Nor would it be able to halt its diminishing influence in the region resulting from the Arab Spring and its support for the Syrian government, according to the author, Alireza Nader.

“Iran’s development of nuclear weapons will enhance its ability to deter an external attack, but it will not enable it to change the Middle East’s geopolitical order in its own favour,” Nader, an international policy analyst at RAND, told IPS. “The Islamic Republic’s challenge to the region is constrained by its declining popularity, a weak economy, and a limited conventional military capability. An Iran with nukes will still be a declining power.”

The report reaches several conclusions all of which generally portray Iran as a rational actor in its international relations.

While Nader calls it a “revisionist state” that tries to undermine what it sees as a U.S.-dominated order in the Middle East, his report stresses that “it does not have territorial ambitions and does not seek to invade, conquer, or occupy other nations.”

Further, the report identifies the Islamic Republic’s military doctrine as defensive in nature. This posture is presumably a result of the volatile and unstable region in which it exists and is exacerbated by its status as a Shi’a and Persian-majority nation in a Sunni and Arab-majority region.

Iran is also scarred by its traumatic eight-year war with Iraq in which as many as one million Iranians lost their lives.

The new report comes amidst a growing controversy here over whether a nuclear-armed Iran could itself be successfully “contained” by the U.S. and its allies and deterred both from pursuing a more aggressive policy in the region and actually using nuclear weapons against its foes.

Iran itself has vehemently denied it intends to build a weapon, and the U.S. intelligence community has reported consistently over the last six years that Tehran’s leadership has not yet decided to do so, although the increasing sophistication and infrastructure of its nuclear programme will make it possible to build one more quickly if such a decision is made.

Official U.S. policy, as enunciated repeatedly by top officials, including President Barack Obama, is to “prevent” Iran from obtaining a weapon, even by military means if ongoing diplomatic efforts and “crippling” economic sanctions fail to persuade Iran to substantially curb its nuclear programme.

A nuclear-armed Iran, in the administration’s view – which is held even more fervently by the U.S. Congress where the Israel lobby exerts its greatest influence – represents an “existential threat” to the Jewish state. ☹

Image: iran-isfahan-nuclear | Credit: Lob Log



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In addition, according to the administration, Iran's acquisition of a weapon would likely embolden it and its allies – notably Lebanon's Hezbollah – to pursue more aggressive actions against their foes and could well set off a regional "cascade effect" in which other powers, particularly Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Egypt, would feel obliged to launch nuclear-weapons programmes of their own.

But a growing number of critics of the prevention strategy – particularly that part of it that would resort to military action against Iran – argue that a nuclear Iran will not be nearly as dangerous as the reigning orthodoxy assumes.

A year ago, for example, Paul Pillar, a veteran CIA analyst who served as National Intelligence Officer for the Middle East and South Asia from 2000 to 2005, published a lengthy [essay](#) in 'The Washington Monthly', "We Can Live With a Nuclear Iran: Fears of a Bomb in Tehran's Hands Are Overhyped, and a War to Prevent It Would Be a Disaster."

More recently, Colin Kahl, an analyst at the Center for a New American Security (CNAS) who also served as the Pentagon's top Middle East policy adviser for much of Obama's first term, published two reports – [the first](#) questioning the "cascade effect" in the region, and the second, published earlier this week and [entitled "If All Else Fails: The Challenges of Containing a Nuclear-Armed Iran,"](#) outlining a detailed "containment strategy" — including extending Washington's nuclear umbrella over states that feel threatened by a nuclear Iran — the U.S. could follow to deter Tehran's use of a nuclear bomb or its transfer to non-state actors, like Hezbollah, and persuade regional states not to develop their own nuclear arms capabilities.

In addition, Kenneth Pollack, a former CIA analyst at the Brookings Institution whose 2002 book, "The Threatening Storm" helped persuade many liberals and Democrats to support the U.S. invasion of Iraq, will publish a new book, "Unthinkable: Iran, the Bomb, and American Strategy", that is also expected to argue for a containment strategy if Iran acquires a nuclear weapon.

Because both Brookings and CNAS are regarded as close to the administration, some neo-conservative commentators have expressed alarm that these reports are "trial balloons" designed to set the stage for Obama's abandonment of the prevention strategy in favour of containment, albeit by another name.

It is likely that Nader's study – coming as it does from RAND, a think tank with historically close ties to the Pentagon – will be seen in a similar light.

His report concedes that Iran's acquisition of nuclear weapons would lead to greater tension with the Gulf Arab monarchies and thus to greater instability in the region. Moreover, an inadvertent or accidental nuclear exchange between Israel and Iran would be a "dangerous possibility", according to Nader who also notes that the "cascade effect", while outside the scope of his study, warrants "careful consideration".

Despite Iran's strong ideological antipathy toward Israel, the report does not argue that Tehran would attack the Jewish state with nuclear weapons, as that would almost certainly lead to the regime's destruction.

Israel, in Nader's view, fears that Iran's nuclear capability could serve as an "umbrella" for Tehran's allies that could significantly hamper Israel's military operations in the Palestinian territories, the Levant, and the wider region.

But the report concludes that Tehran is unlikely to extend its nuclear deterrent to its allies, including Hezbollah, noting that the interests of those groups do not always – or even often – co-incide with Iran's. Iran would also be highly unlikely to transfer nuclear weapons to them in any event, according to the report. [IPS | May 18, 2013]

ARABIC

<http://www.ipsinternational.org/arabic/nota.asp?idnews=2932>

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=955:nuclear-iran-unlikely-to-tilt-regional-power-balance-japanese&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=956:pdf&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3



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U.S.-Russia Nuclear Arsenals Cling to Bygone Era

By GEORGE GAO



UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - In the late 19th century, Russian playwright Anton Chekhov famously touted one golden rule for dramatic productions: if you show your audience a loaded gun in the first act, that gun must go off by the last.

But Chekhov's storytelling trope is troubling if applied to the world's weapons technology today, which include an estimated 17,300 nukes – used primarily by nations as props to leverage international power.

According to the Ploughshares Fund's [World Nuclear Stockpile Report](#), an estimated 8,500 nukes belong to Russia and 7,700 to the U.S. The seven other nations with a nuclear arsenal trail far behind: they include France (300), China (240), the U.K. (225), Pakistan (90-110), India (60-110), Israel (60-80) and most recently North Korea (10).

"It's hard to imagine any military mission that will require the use of one nuclear weapon. The use of 10 weapons would be a catastrophe beyond

human experience, and 50 is unthinkable," said Joe Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation based in the U.S.

"The number you need to actually deter an enemy from attacking the U.S. with or without nuclear weapons is very, very low. To be on the safe side, you might want a couple of hundred," he told IPS. "The idea that we need thousands of nuclear weapons... is an outmoded, irrational, expensive legacy of the Cold War," he said.

While the U.S.'s nuke budget is secret, Cirincione estimates that in the next decade, the U.S. will spend 640 billion dollars on nukes and its related programmes – such as missile defence systems, environmental clean-up of nuclear activity and the technological upgrade of the current nuclear arsenal.

Asked about the U.S.'s role in pushing for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation on the international scale, Cirincione said, "The U.S. is probably the most influential voice in this debate, but it can't do it alone. Most importantly, it needs Russia to reduce the arsenals with them."

On Feb. 5, 2011, the U.S. and Russia entered into force a New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), in which both nations agreed by 2018 to limit the number of their warheads to 1,550; and the number of their combined intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) and heavy bombers equipped for nuclear armaments to 800.

"If the U.S. and Russia can agree to cut their arsenals in half, for example, as they did in the 1980s and the 1990s... it would be universally applauded, and it would be very difficult for bureaucracies and political opponents to resist that in either country," said Cirincione.

But U.S. progress for disarmament and non-proliferation has stalled in the past few years. George Perkovich, director of the Nuclear Policy Programme at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, attributes the U.S.'s balk partly to internal politics in Washington. In his April 2013 monograph, [Do Unto Others: Toward a Defensible Nuclear Doctrine](#), Perkovich writes, "A relatively small, specialized community of experts and officials shapes U.S. nuclear policy."

Members of this community often distort nuclear threats to the U.S., as well as the best ways to respond to such threats, argues Perkovich. They do this not in the U.S.'s national security interest, but in their own career interests to prevent "their domestic rivals from attacking them as too weak to hold office". ☺

Image: The first launch of a Trident missile on Jan. 18, 1977 at Cape Canaveral, Florida. Credit: U.S. Air Force



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Nukes deter U.S.-led regime change

Perkovich also notes in his monograph that Iran, North Korea and Pakistan believe having their own nuclear arsenals deter U.S.-led regime change. They fear the fates of nuclear-free Iraq in 2003 and Libya in 2011.

Asked how the U.S. should respond if future world governments – oppressive or not, who are acting against U.S. interests – continue pursuing nukes to prevent regime change, Perkovich told IPS that would be a difficult problem.

“The one and only thing nuclear weapons are good for is to keep people from invading your country. So, states and leaders that worry about getting invaded tend to find nukes attractive, or alliance with the U.S. attractive,” he said.

“Non-proliferation would be easier to achieve if states didn’t worry they were going to be invaded and/ or overthrown if they didn’t have nuclear weapons.

“The problem, clearly, is that some governments are so brutal and menacing to their own people and neighbours that it is hard to foreswear trying to remove them,” he added.

Perkovich recommended that the U.S. limit pressure against repressive governments to political and moral means, as well as to sanctions; and that the U.S. clarify it won’t act militarily, if the repressive regime does not attack its neighbours or seek nukes.

Cirincione, author of [Bomb Scare: The History and Future of Nuclear Weapons](#), argued that vying for nukes, in Iran and North Korea’s cases, may actually be counterproductive. “I don’t think it improves their security, I think it isolates them even further,” he said. “It prevents them from forging the kind of international ties that can really aid their country, build their economies (and) increase their influence.

“That means that in order to stop those countries from getting or keeping nuclear weapons, you have to address their legitimate security concerns. A part of the engagement with those countries has got to be security assurances that guarantees then that you won’t attack them, or that their neighbours won’t attack them.”

Obama’s nuclear legacy

During his December 2012 speech at the National War College in Washington, U.S. President Barack Obama said, “Missile by missile, warhead by warhead, shell by shell, we’re putting a bygone era behind us.”

Cirincione explained that pursuing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has been important to Obama since his youth. Obama’s first foreign policy speech as president – in Prague in April 2009 – and his first foreign policy speech after re-election both focused on nukes. “The president faces a multitude of pressing issues, but only two of them threaten destruction on a planetary scale: global warming and nuclear weapons,” said Cirincione.

While opposition to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is prevalent inside Washington, it pales in comparison to opposition facing warming, immigration, or tax reform.

“This is an opportunity for the president to make a major improvement in U.S. and global security with a relatively small investment of his time,” said Cirincione, who explained that Obama’s efforts to curb nukes may conclude a historic arc, which started with President John F. Kennedy’s efforts in the 1960s and was accelerated by President Ronald Reagan’s efforts in the 1980s.

Cirincione said, “(Obama’s) got three and a half years to do it. If he starts now, he can get the job done. He can change U.S. nuclear policy to put it irreversibly on a path to fewer nuclear weapons, and eventually (eliminate) this threat from the face of the earth.” [IPS | May 17, 2013]

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=953:us-russia-nuclear-arsenals-cling-to-bygone-era&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

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Nuclear Iran Can Be Contained and Deterred: Report

By JIM LOBE



WASHINGTON (IPS) - While preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon is preferable, the United States could successfully contain a nuclear Iran, according to a [new report](#) released here Monday by the Center for a New American Security, an influential think tank close to the administration of President Barack Obama.

The report, "If All Else Fails: The Challenges of Containing a Nuclear-Armed Iran," outlines a detailed "containment strategy" designed to deter Tehran's use of a nuclear bomb or its transfer to non-state actors, and persuade other regional states not to develop their own nuclear arms capabilities.

"The United States should do everything in its power to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran, and no option should be left off the table," said Colin Kahl, the lead author of the 80-page report and the Pentagon's top Middle East policy official during most of Obama's first term.

"But we also have to consider the possibility that prevention efforts – including the use of force – could fail," he added in an email to IPS. "In that case, we'd need a strategy for managing and mitigating the threats a nuclear-armed Iran would pose to vital U.S. interests and allies. That's what we're focusing on."

The administration, according to the report, has so firmly committed itself to a prevention policy – including threatening military action if diplomatic efforts and economic pressure fail – that cannot explicitly endorse a different approach "without damaging the very credibility it needs to effectively address the Iranian nuclear challenge," according to the report.

At the same time, however, Tehran may be able to achieve "an unstoppable breakout capability" or build a weapon in secret before preventive measures have been exhausted. In addition, a U.S. or Israeli military strike may inflict only minimal damage to Iran's nuclear programme while strengthening hard-liners in the regime who believe a nuclear deterrent is the only way to ensure its survival.

"Under any of these scenarios, Washington would likely be forced to shift toward containment regardless of current preferences," the report notes, arguing that Washington needs to think through the requirements for an effective strategy. The new report adds to a growing literature about U.S. options in dealing with Iran, which has itself repeatedly denied that its nuclear programme is designed to develop nuclear weapons.

The U.S. intelligence community has also reported consistently over the last six years that Iran's leadership has not yet decided to build a weapon, although the increasing sophistication and infrastructure of its nuclear programme will make it possible to build one more quickly if such a decision is made. U.S. intelligence agencies have expressed confidence that they will be able to detect any effort by Iran to achieve a "break-out" capacity.

Since coming to office in 2009, the Obama administration has described its efforts to dissuade Iran from developing a nuclear weapon as a "dual-track" approach involving both diplomatic outreach through the so-called P5+1 process of negotiations between Iran and the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council plus Germany, and economic pressure exerted primarily through the imposition of harsh economic sanctions – some multilateral, most unilateral – designed to "cripple" the Iranian economy.

While the sanctions have clearly damaged Iran's troubled economy, Tehran has so far rejected far-reaching concessions demanded by the Western members of the P5+1, such as suspending all operations at its underground Fordo enrichment facility and shipping most of its 20-percent enriched-uranium stockpile out of the country. ➡

Image credit: Wikimedia Commons



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While there have been some exchanges between the P5+1 and Iran since their last meeting in Almaty, Kazakhstan last month, the diplomatic process appears to have been put on hold pending next month's presidential elections in the Islamic Republic.

The lack of progress on the diplomatic front combined with technological advances in Iran's nuclear programme – with estimates that Tehran will have likely enough enriched uranium to build a bomb within a very short period by next spring or summer — has provoked a simmering conflict here.

It revolves around pro-Israel and proliferation hawks pushing for yet more draconian sanctions and “credible threats of force” by the administration on the one hand and more dovish forces who are calling for more emphasis on the diplomatic track.

Much of the foreign policy establishment, including former senior military, intelligence, and diplomatic officials, lean to the latter camp; recent reports by blue-ribbon task forces of [The Iran Project](#), the [Atlantic Council](#), the [Carnegie Endowment](#), and the [Center for the National Interest](#) have shown a developing elite consensus in favour of greater U.S. flexibility at the negotiating table.

In Congress, where the Israel lobby enjoys its greatest influence, however, the emphasis remains on the pressure track. [Measures](#) currently being circulated in both houses of Congress target foreign companies and banks in ways that, if enforced, would impose a virtual trade embargo against Iran.

The new report, the latest in a series by CNAS on Iran policy, does not address either strategy, although Kahl has in the past [argued](#) for greater U.S. flexibility in negotiations. It is likely, however, to fuel the ongoing debates between the hawks and doves on whether Washington can indeed live with a nuclear-armed Iran if its “prevention” strategy fails.

A containment strategy, according to Kahl and his two-co-authors, Raj Pattani and Jacob Stokes, would integrate five key components: deterrence, defence, disruption, de-escalation and de-nuclearisation.

Deterrence would involve, among other steps, strengthening Washington's threat to retaliate in kind if Iran uses nuclear weapons and extending the U.S. nuclear umbrella to other regional states in exchange for their commitment not to pursue independent nuclear capabilities.

Defence would aim to deny Iran any benefit from its nuclear weapons by building up U.S. missile-defence capabilities and naval deployments in the region and increasing security co-operation with Gulf countries and Israel.

Disruption would include “shap(ing) a regional environment resistant to Iranian influence” by, among other steps, building up Egypt and Iraq as strategic counterweights; “promoting evolutionary political reform” in the Gulf; and increasing aid to moderate elements among Syrian rebels and the Lebanese Army as a counter to Hezbollah.

De-escalation would be designed to prevent any Iran-related crisis from spiralling to nuclear war “persuading Israel to eschew preemptive nuclear doctrine and other destabilizing nuclear postures,” creating crisis-communication mechanisms and exploring confidence-building measures with Iran; assuring Tehran that “regime change” is not Washington's goal, and providing it with “‘face-saving’ exit ramps” during crises.

Finally, de-nuclearisation would try to constrain Iran's nuclear programme and limit broader damage to the non-proliferation regime by maintaining and tightening sanctions against Iran and strengthening interdiction efforts.

The report stressed that such a strategy would entail major costs, including “doubling down on U.S. security commitments to the Middle East,” making the administration's military “rebalancing” to the Asia/Pacific more difficult; “greatly complicate efforts to promote reform” allied Arab states; and “increase the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy at the very time the Obama administration hopes to move in the opposite direction.”

The CNAS report was immediately assailed by several prominent neo-conservatives who have long been warning that Obama, given his clear reluctance to risk war in another predominantly Muslim country, would himself eschew his prevention strategy in favour of “containment by another name.” ➔



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But, as noted by Kahl, the hard-line neo-conservative American Enterprise Institute published [a paper](#) 18 months ago that concluded that “containing and deterring” a nuclear-armed Iran could be the “least-bad choice” for U.S. policy if Washington can “demonstrate that it can deter both Iran’s use of nuclear weapons and aggression by Tehran’s network of partners and terrorist proxies.”

Kahl’s position on containment is also expected to be echoed with the anticipated publication by Ken Pollack, a former CIA analyst at the Brookings Institution, of his new book, “Unthinkable: Iran, the Bomb, and American Strategy”. Pollack’s 2002 book, “The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq,” helped persuade many liberals and Democrats to back the invasion. [IPS | May 14, 2013]

ARABIC

<http://www.ipsinternational.org/arabic/nota.asp?idnews=2925>

GERMAN

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UN Accused of Playing Down Nuke Disarmament Conference

By THALIF DEEN



UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is one of the most vociferous advocates of a world free of nuclear weapons. “Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are not utopian ideals,” he says. “They are critical to global peace and security.”

Still, the Group of 77, the largest single coalition of 132 developing countries, implicitly accuses the United Nations of falling short in its efforts to publicise a meeting on nuclear disarmament scheduled to take place Sep. 26.

Ambassador Peter Thomson of Fiji, the G77 chair, described the upcoming talks as “the first-ever high level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament.” He said the meeting is of importance to developing nations, and therefore, all efforts should be made to give it timely and wide publicity.

A G77 delegate told IPS the conference is not getting the advance publicity it should, probably because three of the big powers, the United States, UK and France, are not supportive of the meeting. “We have not seen anything on the high level meeting so far,” he added. The lack of coverage stands in contrast to the strong public stand taken by the secretary-general, who has consistently called for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Asked about the significance of the upcoming meeting, Dr. John Burroughs, executive director of the New York-based Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, told IPS the meeting is a chance for world leaders, including U.S. President Barack Obama and others, to give direction to the nuclear disarmament enterprise, “which is now drifting aimlessly despite much rhetoric over the past five years.” ☺



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“Of course they should reassert that the global elimination of nuclear weapons is a shared aim of the international community,” he said.

But they can and should do more, he said, specifically to set in motion concrete, multilateral processes to achieve that objective.

“If there can be a Nuclear Security Summit process, focused on securing nuclear materials, why can there not be a Nuclear Disarmament Summit Process?” he asked.

Or definitive action could be taken to overcome the 16-year deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament, if necessary by establishing a separate process, Dr Burroughs said.

The resolution calling for the high-level meeting, which was sponsored by Indonesia and the 120-member Non-Aligned Movement, was adopted last December in the General Assembly by a vote of 179 to none against, with four abstentions (Israel, and three of the five permanent members of the Security Council, namely France, UK and the United States).

The other two permanent members, China and Russia, voted for the resolution.

All five permanent members are the world’s five declared nuclear powers, with India, Pakistan, Israel, and more recently North Korea, outside the P-5 nuclear club.

In an explanation of his country’s decision to abstain on the vote, Guy Pollard, deputy permanent representative of the UK, told delegates last December, “We question the value of holding a high-level meeting (HLM) of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament when there are already sufficient venues for such discussion.”

He cited the General Assembly’s First Committee (on Disarmament), the U.N. Disarmament Commission, and the Conference on Disarmament.

“We are puzzled about how such a HLM will further the goals of the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) Action Plan that was agreed by consensus in 2010,” Pollard said.

“In our view,” he said, “this roadmap of actions offers the best way of taking forward the multilateral nuclear disarmament agenda, along with related issues.”

“We continue to believe that nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are mutually reinforcing and therefore regret that this high level meeting doesn’t treat both of these aspects in a balanced manner,” Pollard said.

Meanwhile, in a new study released last month, George Perkovich, director of the Nuclear Policy Programme at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, points out one of the few ways that President Obama could restore confidence in U.S. intentions would be to update the declaration of the role of nuclear weapons in U.S. security policy, including in defence of its allies.

“In his searching Nobel Peace Prize speech (in December 2009), Obama recognised the occasional inescapability of war and the imperative of waging it justly,” Perkovich said.

So, too, Obama now could examine how the ongoing existence of nuclear arsenals, even if temporary, can be reconciled with the moral-strategic imperative to prevent their use, says the study titled “Do Unto Others: Toward a Defensible Nuclear Doctrine.”

“The president could articulate a limited framework for the legitimate use of nuclear weapons that the United States believes would be defensible for others to follow as long as nuclear weapons remain,” it says. ➡



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Such a nuclear policy, says Perkovich, could then be conveyed in the U.S. Defence Department's Quadrennial Posture Review, which is due later this year.

Dr. Burroughs told IPS that non-nuclear weapon states have been doing their best to create opportunities to set a clear course on disarmament.

At the initiative of Austria, Mexico and Norway, the General Assembly in 2012 established an open-ended working group on taking forward proposals on multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, scheduled to meet for three weeks this summer in Geneva.

Norway hosted a conference in Oslo in March on the humanitarian impact of nuclear explosions. And Indonesia and the Non-Aligned Movement proposed the resolution last year that scheduled the September high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament.

"However, the P-5 in the Security Council have been recalcitrant. So far they have said they will not participate in the open-ended working group," said Dr. Burroughs.

They also declined the invitation to participate in the Oslo meeting. And last year the UK, the United States, and France, along with Israel, abstained on the resolution scheduling the high-level meeting, expressing doubt as to its value, he added.

"So the personal engagement of heads of state/government and foreign ministers is clearly necessary," Burroughs said. At lower levels, the Permanent Five officials have been floundering, he added. "Unless there is a change of tune coming from the very top, the September meeting will turn out to be a fruitless exercise," he said.

The crisis on the Korean peninsula should be a wake-up call.

The nuclear threats exchanged by North Korea and the United States have once again laid bare an often underappreciated fact, the unacceptable risks arising from reliance on nuclear weapons.

In September, P-5 leaders and other governments possessing nuclear arsenals should seize the moment to signal clearly, to their own governments as well as to the world, that they will now engage constructively with non-nuclear weapon states on a process for the global elimination of nuclear weapons, he said.

Parliamentarians, mayors, and civil society groups working for a nuclear weapons-free world should also take advantage of this global platform, which surprisingly is the first time a General Assembly high-level meeting will be held on nuclear disarmament, Dr Burroughs said. [IPS | May 06, 2013]

ARABIC

<http://www.ipsinternational.org/arabic/nota.asp?idnews=2917>

GERMAN

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=943:entwicklungslaender-kritisieren-geringe-publizitaet-fuer-hochrangiges-abruestungstreffen-&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=946:un-accused-of-playing-down-uke-disarmament-conference-japanese&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

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SWEDISH

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=11&Itemid=12



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH MAY 2013 ARTICLES

In-Depth Reports

'Don't Take Arabs' NPT Membership for Granted'

By BAHER KAMAL*

CAIRO (IDN) - Not that nuclear issues are an actual source of concern to Egyptian citizens. They are deeply worried about their present and immediate future now that inter-religious violence is on the rise, triggering a dangerous, growing insecurity amidst an overwhelming popular discontent with President Mohamed Morsi's regime. Simply put, there is too much frustration and deception here to think of nukes.

Nevertheless, it is also a fact that the governments of Arab countries in general, and in the Gulf region in particular – following reported U.S. political pressures – have lately been expressing increasing fear of Iran's nuclear programme and therefore focusing, again, on nukes.

In fact, Bahrain's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ghanum Fadhel Al Buainain, and Foreign Affairs Minister Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, told this journalist in Manama in March that their nation – as well as all other Gulf countries – do not want to hear a word about any nuclear activities, even for peaceful purposes.

Their arguments are that even civil nuclear activities of whatever nature, have strong, negative impacts on the very lives and livelihoods of the Gulf peoples, from polluting waters and thus affecting the fish – which historically constitutes the main source of living – to the risk of a nuclear accident.

These anxieties are shared by Egypt, which has always played a pivotal role in efforts aimed at declaring the Middle East a nuclear-free-zone. In fact, Egyptian diplomacy continues to undertake efforts in that direction in spite of the internal situation, with the support of Arab countries.

Egypt's perspective was explained to this journalist by one of the country's top experts on this issue, Major General (Ret.) [Mohamed Kadry Said](#), Military and Technology Advisor and head of the Military Studies Unit at the [Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies](#), Cairo

Mohamed Kadry believes that in spite of all obstacles, a major breakthrough is required to end the current nuclear deadlock in the region, where Israel is the only atomic power, though the Iranian nuclear programme continues to draw attention – and sanctions – in Western countries.

Should such a breakthrough not happen, Egypt and Arab countries may withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which they were pushed to join in 1995 in exchange of U.S. promises to free the Middle East from atomic warheads, Israeli nuclear arsenal included.

Mohamed Kadry emphasized that currently no Arab country in the region has a 'declared' nuclear project. "The only exception in the Middle East is Israel. I am talking about the Arabs, not Iran, not Pakistan," he said. Asked how he viewed the fact that Israel is estimated to have some 230 nuclear bombs – a figure that exceeds the combined number of atomic warheads in India and Pakistan – Mohamed Kadry said the number of Israel's nuclear warheads varies according to different estimates, though the figure of 150 heads has been most often circulated.

Some estimates put this number between 100 and 200 nuclear bombs. "Anyway, whether 100 or 200 it does not make a real difference. The really important fact here is that the very possession of nukes is dreadful." ☞



*Baher Kamal is an Egyptian-born Spanish national with nearly 40 years of professional experience as a journalist. He is Publisher and Director of [Human Wrongs Watch](#), Spain.

Picture: Mohamed Kadry Said | Credit: [facebook.com/mohamedkadry.said](https://www.facebook.com/mohamedkadry.said)



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In-Depth Reports

Interview excerpts

Following are excerpts from this journalist's interview with the Kadry:

Question: During their last five-year periodical NPT review conference in New York in May 2010, participants agreed to launch an international conference to discuss ways how to free the Middle East from nuclear weapons. After intensive negotiations, Finland announced the hosting of such a conference in Helsinki last year. But the meeting has been postponed . . .

Mohamed Kadry (MK): Let me give you some background. Because of dreadful consequences and the menace emerging from any new atomic power, the international community decided to establish the NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty). The initial idea was that the Treaty would be open to all countries to join, with a review or a renewal discussion process every ten years, after which any country could renew its membership in the Treaty or just withdraw from it. At the beginning, Egypt and Arab countries decided not to join the Treaty . . .

Q: Why?

MK: Perhaps because they considered it 'useless' in view of the fact that it was a Treaty out of which anybody could walk out. At this stage the U.S. appeared on the scene pressurising Egypt and the Arabs as well as Iran to join the NPT. They agreed to join in exchange of two promises: that the Treaty would be valid indefinitely – instead of being renewable every ten years – and that efforts would be made to free the Middle East from nuclear weapons. Of course, this would include Israel. All that process culminated in 1995. [The Treaty was opened for signature in 1968, and it entered into force in 1970. On May 11, 1995, it was extended indefinitely.]

Q: That very year the UN Security Council issued a resolution on the need to free the region from atomic weapons. Any breakthrough since then?

MK: The fact that the Security Council's resolution was adopted in 1995 did mean that the whole issue would be settled that very year. It would be the starting point . . .

Q: But with the exception of the 2010 decision to hold an international conference to find ways how to eliminate nuclear weapons in the Middle East, nothing has happened over the last 18 years. Why should then the Arab countries in the region continue to be a part of the Treaty?

MK: The fact is that Arab research centres have met on several occasions in the previous months to discuss precisely this point. So far, there is a general consensus that if the planned Helsinki conference is not held this year, in 2013, then we would recommend to Arab governments to withdraw from the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Q: The Iranian nuclear programme was launched in 2003, before current president Ahmadi Nijad was elected. Tehran claimed that it can enrich its uranium by 20 percent. But the scientific community assures that an atomic bomb requires 95 per cent enriched uranium. Do you think Iran has the capability to produce nuclear weapons?

MK: Yes, definitely!

Q: Are you saying that Iran already has nuclear weapons?

MK: I said that they have the "capability" to produce them . . . this is a very complex process.

Q: Back to the Middle East nuclear-free-zone and the postponed Helsinki conference. Do you think that such a conference will ever take place?

MK: Yes, I do believe so.

Q: With a specific, legally binding, and an applicable outcome?

MK: I believe something will happen . . . I mean a breakthrough like what occurred after the Second World War.

Q: Such a breakthrough would really imply the elimination of all nukes in the Middle East, including Israeli atomic arsenal? How realistic is this?

MK: I think so. Realistic? Who did expect all those major changes that happened after the Second World War, particularly in Europe? [IDN-InDepthNews – May 3, 2013]



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What Others Say

Tackling Nuclear Proliferation At Its Roots

By IAN ANTHONY AND LINA GRIP*

Making nuclear weapons requires access to materials – highly enriched uranium or plutonium – that do not exist in nature in a weapons-usable form. To constitute a threat, natural uranium needs to go through a challenging and time-consuming process of transformation as it moves through the nuclear fuel cycle.

STOCKHOLM (IDN) - The effort to cap the number of nuclear armed states in the world has largely focused on limiting the spread of the industrial items and processes needed for the stages of the fuel cycle that can turn uranium or plutonium into forms that could be used to make a nuclear weapon: enrichment or reprocessing.

The most important suppliers of nuclear technology have recently agreed guidelines to restrict access to the most sensitive industrial items, in the framework of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). Nevertheless, the number of countries proficient in these industrial processes has increased over time, and it is now questionable whether a strategy based on close monitoring of technology 'choke points' is by itself a reliable barrier to nuclear proliferation.

Not all the states that have developed a complex nuclear fuel cycle have naturally abundant uranium. This has created a global market for uranium that is relatively free – particularly compared with the market for sensitive technologies. As countries of proliferation concern achieve proficiency in the most sensitive industrial processes, restricting access to natural uranium could be part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to non-proliferation across the fuel cycle.

Today, the proliferation risks associated with industrial processes used to extract uranium attract relatively little attention. Natural uranium does not, for example, fall under the NSG supplier guidelines or International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. Most uranium-producing states seem to be working hard to ensure that they do not contribute to nuclear weapon programmes. However, these countries (some of which have very limited resources to devote to the effort) still face significant challenges.

Many African states have experienced increased investment in their uranium extractive sectors in recent years. Many, though not all, have signed and ratified the 1996 African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (Pelindaba) Treaty, which entered into force in 2009.

Furthermore, in recent years, the relevant countries have often worked with the IAEA to introduce an Additional Protocol to their safeguards agreement with the agency. By signing an Additional Protocol, the state commits to collect, and make available to the IAEA on request, information specifying the location, operational status and the estimated annual production capacity of uranium mines and concentration plants as well as their current annual production.

However, the value of this information for the purposes of non-proliferation is limited, as it is only provided after some time has passed since extraction, and detailed nuclear material accountancy is not required.

Closing gaps in uranium market regulation

The success of the Pelindaba Treaty and safeguards agreements depends on the quality of their national implementation. Finding a balance between effectiveness and affordability requires states to think carefully about which legal and technical competences are required and how to organize administrative efforts for success.

One proliferation risk inherent in the current system is that inadequate or falsified information connected to what appear to be legitimate transactions will facilitate uranium acquisition by countries that the producer country would not wish to supply. ☞

Image credit: Wikimedia Commons





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To reduce this risk, national regulators need to have full picture of how uranium extracted on their territory is to be used. Current systems normally monitor the physical movement of uranium from extraction until it arrives at the place where it is converted to the feedstock introduced into a uranium enrichment plant. However, the regulators often appear to have little knowledge of the associated commercial arrangements.

Governments could consider imposing disclosure requirements on the companies engaged in extraction, regarding the customers, size of payments, beneficiaries of payment arrangements and sub-contracting arrangements for the supply of services (such as transportation). The information provided could then be scrutinized to help reduce proliferation risk. Parts of government responsible for reducing proliferation risk do not currently seem to have access to this information—if it is being collected at all.

A second risk is that uranium ore concentrate (UOC) is diverted, either from the site where it was processed or during transportation, so the legitimate owners no longer have control over it. UOC is usually produced at facilities close to mines – often at the mining site itself – to avoid the cost and inconvenience of transporting large quantities of very heavy ore in raw form to a processing plant.

UOC is usually packed into steel drums that are loaded into standard shipping containers for onward movement by road, rail or sea for further processing. The loss of custody over relatively small quantities of UOC represents a serious risk if diversion takes place regularly. The loss of even one full standard container during transport would be a serious proliferation risk by itself. There is thus a need for physical protection of the ore concentrate to reduce the risk of diversion at these stages.

A third risk is that some uranium extraction activity is not covered by the existing rules. For example, uranium extraction can be a side activity connected to gold mining or the production of phosphates. Regulations should cover all activities that could lead to uranium extraction, not only those where uranium extraction is the main stated objective. It is also important that all actors involved in uranium extraction are aware of the potential proliferation risks arising from their activities and engaged in risk-mitigation efforts.

Restricting access to natural uranium could be an important aspect of the global efforts to obstruct the spread of nuclear weapons. The time is ripe to start thinking seriously about the design of such control measures and how responsibility can be shared across the non-proliferation regime.

*Dr Ian Anthony is the Research Coordinator at SIPRI and Director of the SIPRI Arms Control and Non-proliferation Programme. Lina Grip is a Researcher with the Arms Control and Non-proliferation Programme. This article first appeared on the SIPRI website under the title 'The global market in natural uranium – From proliferation risk to non-proliferation opportunity'. It is being republished by arrangement with SIPRI. [IDN-InDepthNews - May 13, 2013]

Original <> http://www.sipri.org/media/newsletter/essay/anthony_grip_April13

Not all the states that have developed a complex nuclear fuel cycle have naturally abundant uranium. This has created a global market for uranium that is relatively free – particularly compared with the market for sensitive technologies. As countries of proliferation concern achieve proficiency in the most sensitive industrial processes, restricting access to natural uranium could be part of a comprehensive and integrated approach to non-proliferation across the fuel cycle.

Visit also <http://www.peoplesdecade.org/news/experts/>



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What Others Say

Too Little on Nuclear Nonproliferation

By Mia Gandenberger | Visiting Disarmament Fellow, Los Alamos Study Group

[May 26, 2013] - The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which entered into force in 1970, is the backbone of the world's nuclear non-proliferation regime – and the only multilateral, legally-binding treaty requiring nuclear disarmament.

The treaty divides states into “nuclear weapon states” – Russia, the United States, France, China and the United Kingdom – which commit themselves to complete nuclear disarmament, and “non-nuclear weapon states,” which commit themselves not to acquire nuclear weapons but are allowed to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

But the division of the world into nuclear “haves” and “have-nots” has never been accepted by most countries. Over the years the treaty has reached near-universality, with only India, Israel and Pakistan remaining outside its regime. North Korea left the treaty in 2003.

In 2010, the United States, United Kingdom and Russia agreed to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. At the last minute the U.S. announced that the conference could not be held in 2012, in effect postponing it indefinitely – just as a similar promise made in 1995 had been abandoned.

This was not received well by Arab states and caused them to consider boycotting the 2013 Non-Proliferation Treaty meeting. In the end they attended, but on April 29 Egypt announced it would not participate in the remaining sessions as a demonstration of its frustration with the lack of progress.

Egypt's walkout did not threaten the treaty or its non-proliferation regime, but depending on future developments regarding the Middle East Conference in particular and nuclear disarmament in general, tensions may well increase and states may begin to contemplate tearing up their Non-Proliferation Treaty membership cards.

After all, the great majority of states of the world has been calling for complete nuclear disarmament for a very long time.

The credibility, legitimacy and effectiveness not just of the treaty's non-proliferation regime but all non-proliferation diplomacy ultimately rest on the promise and performance of disarmament. Troubled times for the treaty are troubled times for the entire non-proliferation regime.

As one of the five nuclear weapon states under the treaty, the U.S. has a special responsibility to implement its disarmament and other international commitments.

Yet it struggles to do so.

While it is very keenly pursuing efforts to prevent proliferation in connection with Iran and North Korea, the New START agreement with Russia serves as an excuse to press “pause” on the nuclear disarmament required by the Non-Proliferation Treaty and increasingly expected by the other signatories.

Not only is there no progress on disarmament, but the U.S. is very active in modernizing nuclear warheads, delivery systems and the laboratories and plants that design, maintain and manufacture nuclear weapons.

New Mexico's nuclear labs, the best-funded in the world, are centrally involved in promoting and conducting a mission the U.S. has pledged to end. This month, at the recent Non-Proliferation Treaty meeting, non-nuclear weapon states again openly and at times severely criticized the U.S. and the other nuclear weapon states for their modernization programs and called for their termination.

Regardless of local sentiment and current spending policies, the fact remains that nuclear weapons missions will inevitably decline. These weapons are incompatible with successful non-proliferation diplomacy, not to mention broader human security aspirations. ☞



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Repeated disregard for disarmament commitments is increasingly a liability for the non-proliferation regime. While the non-nuclear weapon states have kept their end of the bargain and have not acquired nuclear weapons, the nuclear weapon states have little to no progress to report on their part.

The U.S. and other nuclear weapon states need to live up to their responsibilities and start applying their own standards to themselves.

By itself, treaty compliance won't be enough but it is essential, and it may well prove immediately helpful in addressing the so-called cases of concern, i.e. Iran, North Korea and Syria.

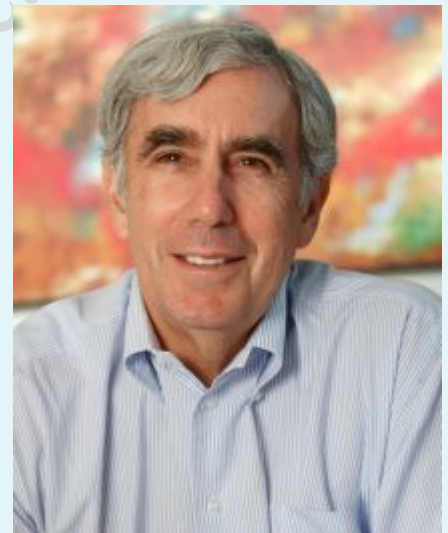
Universal non-proliferation can only be achieved and maintained in a world that has no nuclear weapons. ☐

Source <> <http://www.abqjournal.com/main/203450/opinion/too-little-on-nuclear-nonproliferation.html>

Two Perspectives on Nuclear Weapons

By DAVID KRIEGER*

[May 20, 2013] - There are two basic and quite disparate ways in which nuclear weapons are viewed. The first is that these weapons provide security and power to their possessors. I would call this the view of the Nuclear Nine – the nine countries that possess nuclear weapons – and their allies. The second is that nuclear weapons undermine the security of their possessors and must be abolished. I would call this the humane view of the hibakusha (survivors of the atomic bombings).



The perspective of the Nuclear Nine and their allies is based upon nuclear deterrence, which is a hypothesis about human communications and behavior. Nuclear deterrence is the threat to retaliate with nuclear weapons if another country commits a prohibited act. Such an act might be a nuclear attack, but it could encompass a much broader range of prohibited acts. One major problem with nuclear deterrence is that it is unproven to work under all circumstances. It requires rational leaders, and not all leaders are rational at all times. Further, it requires a territory to retaliate against, thus making it inapplicable to terrorist organizations. The bottom line with nuclear deterrence is that it might or might not work. There are no guarantees, and it could fail spectacularly.

Nations rely upon nuclear deterrence at their peril. It is a concept that is intellectually bankrupt. I would equate nuclear deterrence to the French Maginot Line. Prior to World War II, the Maginot Line was highly praised for its high-tech defensive capabilities. However, when the Germans chose to invade and occupy France, they simply went around the Maginot Line and it provided no defense to France. Nuclear weapons are a Maginot Line in the Mind; that is, they provide a false sense of security based on a belief in the effectiveness of threatening mass murder. I fear this will not be understood by political and military leaders until nuclear deterrence fails and that line in the mind proves useless for defense, as surely it will if the status quo continues.

The hibakusha perspective, on the other hand, is based upon the immorality and illegality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons as well as the uncertainty and unreliability of nuclear deterrence. Can there be any doubt that weapons that cannot differentiate between civilians and combatants and that cause suffering to generations yet unborn are immoral and illegal? Further, if nuclear deterrence were to fail, as it has come close to doing on numerous occasions, there would be catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

At the relatively mild end of the spectrum (but, of course, not mild at all), cities and countries would be destroyed, as happened at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. At the most severe end of the spectrum, nuclear war could be an extinction event for human beings and other forms of complex life. ➡



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To describe the destructive potential of nuclear weapons, philosopher John Somerville coined the word omnicide, meaning the death of all. In between these degrees of nuclear annihilation, there is the possibility of global nuclear famine, which atmospheric scientists predict would result from a relatively "small" nuclear war using only 100 Hiroshima-size weapons that could lead to a billion deaths by starvation.

Which is the better perspective? The perspective of the Nuclear Nine and their allies is not sustainable. It may provide a false security for some countries, but it provides insecurity for the vast majority of countries as well as for all humans, including those living in Nuclear Nine countries and their allies. This perspective encourages nuclear proliferation, nuclear brinkmanship, nuclear terrorism and nuclear war. The perspective of the hibakusha, on the other hand, would level the playing field and fulfill the obligation for nuclear disarmament, which is an important element in the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is a far more sensible, decent, humane and prudent perspective. □

*David Krieger is President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. | Photo by Phil Channing

Source <> http://www.wagingpeace.org/articles/db_article.php?article_id=482

Preventing Use of Nuclear Weapons

Editorial, The Japan Times

[May 11, 2013] - Japan recently refused to support an international joint statement which stressed that "It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances."

The Japanese government's failure to sign the statement is regrettable in view of the simple fact that Japan became the first nation in history to suffer from the use of nuclear weapons through the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. In addition, a nuclear catastrophe happened at Tokyo Electric Power Co.'s Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant, causing great hardship to residents of Fukushima Prefecture.

Some 150,000 people from the prefecture are still forced to live away from their homes because the homes are located in areas contaminated by radioactive substances from the plant.

The Japanese are among the few on Earth who have experienced the dread of exposure to radiation whether it is from a nuclear weapon or from a nuclear power plant accident. Many Japanese citizens will not accept the government's decision not to sign the statement, which was supported on April 24 by 74 countries at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in Geneva.

The joint statement said in part, "It is a shared responsibility of all States to prevent the use of nuclear weapons." It also said, "The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination." It would not be far-fetched to say that by not supporting it, Japan has negated its own hard experience it could use to accelerate moves toward the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The government explained that it refused to support the statement after taking into consideration the security situation Japan finds itself in. It is apparently referring to the protection provided by the United States' nuclear umbrella.

But the government has the responsibility to answer the question of what it thinks of the horrible and numerous deaths caused by the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings, the physical and psychological sufferings of the bombing survivors, and the continuing sufferings and fears of Fukushima people.

It should consider the possibility that the more countries support the joint statement, the more pressure it will exert on countries that have nuclear weapons, thus deterring them from using nuclear weapons. An attitude as shown by Japan could weaken worldwide efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation and even strengthen the belief that nuclear weapons are useful and usable. ☹



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Pointing to “the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons,” the joint statement said, “the catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed.” The government also should pay attention to this point.

Four NATO countries — Denmark, Iceland, Luxembourg and Norway — supported the joint statement although they are protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Japan should study their thinking and use the study results to change its attitude toward international efforts to prevent the use of nuclear weapons. □

Source <> <http://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2013/05/11/editorials/preventing-use-of-nuclear-weapons/#.UcblbSheRdi>

The Strategic Concept of Disarmament

Below is the text of a speech by Angela Kane, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, entitled "The Strategic Concept of Disarmament". It was delivered at a panel on "The future of multilateral non-proliferation regimes and initiatives: the perspective of international organizations and conventions" at the Annual NATO Conference on WMD Arms Control, Disarmament, and Non-Proliferation in Split, Croatia on May 6, 2013



I am deeply grateful for this opportunity to join you today at this annual NATO Conference. Yet my gratitude is not just personal. I wish to compliment the organizers for including "Disarmament" as a principal subject, along with Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

It is also fitting that this Panel would feature the views of international organizations and conventions about the future of multilateral non-proliferation regimes and related initiatives.

After all, the United Nations and NATO have long stood together for many common principles and goals. This is apparent in the first sentence of the Preamble of the North Atlantic Treaty, in which the parties reaffirmed their faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter. The rest of that treaty referred specifically to some of the Charter's most fundamental norms regarding the requirement for the peaceful settlement of disputes, the duty to refrain from the threat or use of force inconsistent with the Charter, and the advancement of the rule of law.

One important difference, of course, is that the North Atlantic Treaty says nothing about disarmament, a goal also found in the Charter—one that has been a core objective of the United Nations as an institution since the General Assembly adopted its first resolution in January 1946. The UN is not, of course, a regional alliance and certainly not one that relies on nuclear deterrence. Our concept of security is not weapon-based but grounded in the fundamental norms of the Charter, reinforced by the process of disarmament and the limitation of conventional arms. Our work focuses on the interests of all our Member States. And our membership is global.

Nevertheless, both NATO and the United Nations have changed in many ways since their establishment and I believe there has been a significant amount of convergence. We have faced new challenges. Our membership has expanded. And we have had to adapt our policies, priorities, objectives, and structures to keep up with these new demands.

What I find most striking are not the many differences that distinguish us, but the many common goals we share.

We are each working on conventional arms control, curbing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, preventing both the global proliferation and acquisition by non-State actors of weapons of mass destruction, while also promoting universal membership and full compliance with all multilateral WMD treaties. And especially during a global financial crisis, we all share a common interest in restraining the growth of military expenditures, which last year again exceeded \$1.7 trillion. ☺

Source <> <http://www.un.org/disarmament/update/20130506/>



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The many challenges we are facing are difficult and will require extensive cooperation among many countries over many years. On nuclear disarmament, NATO agreed at its summit in Chicago last year that the allies shared a common vision of "creating the conditions necessary for a world without nuclear weapons". From a nuclear alliance, this language is welcome.

Yet when it comes to necessary conditions, surely non-proliferation is also a goal that will advance when its own necessary conditions are met. And in the eyes of most UN Member States, significant progress on disarmament is one such condition.

I note that both final documents adopted by consensus at the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences stated, and I quote: "the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons". That is quite a statement, since it points to a security guarantee far greater than is available from nuclear deterrence itself or any other alternative.

It is not at all surprising therefore that disarmament would be part of the "grand bargain" at the heart of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and in countless General Assembly resolutions—all of which indicate that nuclear disarmament is not simply a distant aspiration, but a responsibility shared by all States deserving—as Hamlet would say—"the name of action".

In this sense, the elimination of all threats of proliferation must never be viewed as a precondition for the achievement of nuclear disarmament, just as the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world must not become a prerequisite for progress in non-proliferation. We have addressed this sequencing dilemma at the UN by bypassing it entirely. In both the Secretariat and among the vast majority of our Member States, we believe that both goals are mutually reinforcing and must be pursued vigorously together. Indeed, at the UN we have been pursuing both the elimination of WMD and the limitation and regulation of conventional armaments for 67 years. These are among our most durable and most solemn objectives.

This is the only fair and effective way to avoid what might be called a pre-conditions race, with one bloc of countries demanding Step A as a precondition for Step B, and another bloc arguing vice versa. This is a sure recipe for the type of deadlock we have been witnessing for many years at the Conference of Disarmament.

In terms of the future of the various international non-proliferation regimes, the continued pursuit of this holistic approach will be absolutely essential. Nobody should assume that any regime structured on a have/have-not principle can be sustained forever, a point that is reflected in many of the stresses being experienced in the NPT regime. These strains were most recently aggravated by the failure to convene a mandated conference last year on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. And sure enough, a contentious debate over "conditions" was once again at the heart of the matter.

Together, you in NATO and we at the UN must find a way to rekindle a sense of our common interests. One of NATO's first Secretaries General, Paul-Henri Spaak, had earlier served as the first President of the UN General Assembly. As that Assembly opened, he called upon all delegations to remember—in advancing their own particular national interests—that these interests must, in his words, "take their place in the wider setting of the general interest." I think that is good advice today in advancing the common interest in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

It is in this spirit that we should consider certain policies that are causing stresses in the global nuclear non-proliferation regime—I am referring here to ongoing modernization programmes for nuclear bombs, warheads, delivery vehicles, and the infrastructures to produce and maintain them; the foreign deployment of tactical nuclear weapons; the perpetuation of the first-use nuclear doctrine; and the maintenance of nuclear weapons on high-alert status. These activities are important to view not just in the context of a single alliance, but also from the standpoint of how they look to those outside the alliance who are working to eliminate such weapons all together. ➡

Picture: UN





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In this respect, the growing interest being expressed worldwide—at the recent Oslo conference on the subject, at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and at the General Assembly—for approaching nuclear weapons from a humanitarian perspective, all remind me of those wise words uttered so many years ago about the "wider setting of the general interest". We may well discover that it is precisely in advancing the general interest that we will be best able to advance our individual interests.

So I will conclude by suggesting that the time may have come for NATO to consider adopting a Strategic Concept paper devoted just to nuclear disarmament. It is not sufficient simply to note the existence of a goal and to subject its achievement to numerous conditions. A world free of nuclear weapons is in fact not just a normative goal—it must also be a strategic goal, in the highest national security interests of each member of this alliance, and each member of the world community. To be meaningful, a strategic goal requires the articulation of concrete measures to achieve it, a plan of action, and a process for reviewing progress made in implementing it and for responding to setbacks along the way.

It should not be that difficult to devise such a strategy, since many of its benchmarks have already been agreed in consensus multilateral documents adopted both at the UN and at NPT arenas. I believe such a Strategic Concept paper would go far in helping to clarify that when the members of this Alliance speak of nuclear disarmament, they take it seriously not just as a noble goal to be achieved in some distant era, but as an objective to be rooted in the individual laws and policies of each member state, and a guiding star for future cooperation within the Alliance.

I have limited my remarks today mostly to nuclear weapons because I view them as the most dangerous and indiscriminate of all WMD, though the basic humanitarian values that inspire nuclear disarmament initiatives also apply to the elimination of both biological and chemical weapons. This is the common denominator that unites all the various WMD non-proliferation regimes—and the stronger this bond, the better will be the prospects for the future of those regimes. We share a great common cause in pursuing the elimination of all such weapons and we all—NATO included—have important roles to play in achieving this great goal. I very much look forward to your future initiatives and your support for efforts at the UN to fulfil its historic mandates in this field. □

Visit http://www.un.org/disarmament/HomePage/HR/docs/2013/2013-05-06-NATO_Split.pdf for PDF version

China's No-First-Use Policy Promotes Nuclear Disarmament

By HUI ZHANG

[May 22, 2013] - On April 16, the Chinese Ministry of Defense released the eighth edition of China's bi-annual white paper on defense since 1998. However, unlike the previous editions, this one does not reiterate China's long-standing doctrine of no-first-use nuclear weapons. The obvious omission has sparked a debate over whether China is changing its nuclear doctrine. If China abandons its no-first-use nuclear pledge, which has guided China's nuclear strategy since its first nuclear test in 1964, it would severely undermine the global disarmament process, potentially preventing the U.S. and Russian from further reducing their nuclear arsenals and even encouraging the U.S. to expand its nuclear forces. Is China really changing its nuclear policy?

Colonel Yang Yujun, a spokesman for China's Ministry of Defense, answered this question unambiguously during a briefing on April 25 when he stated: "China repeatedly reaffirms that China has always pursued no-first-use nuclear weapons policy, upholds its nuclear strategy of self-defense, and never takes part in any form of nuclear arms race with any country. The policy has never been changed. The concern about changes of China's nuclear policy is unnecessary."

Colonel Yang also explained that all former White Papers (with the same general title "China's National Defense") were comprehensive (zonghe xing), and elaborated on China's nuclear policy in detail in sections on "national defense policy" and "arms control." But this latest edition for the first time adopts a "thematic" model (zhuantu xing) and focuses specifically on the employment of China's armed forces; it does not address nuclear policy in detail.

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Source <> <http://thediplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2013/05/22/chinas-no-first-use-policy-promotes-nuclear-disarmament/>



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While the new white paper does not explore generally its no-first-use policy, it emphasizes that the PLA Second Artillery Force (PLASAF) is “primarily responsible for deterring other countries from using nuclear weapons against China, and carrying out nuclear counterattack.” It also explains clearly how the PLASAF employs its nuclear force during peace and war time:

“[China] keeps an appropriate level of readiness in peacetime... If China comes under a nuclear attack, the nuclear missile force of the PLASAF will use nuclear missiles to launch a resolute counterattack either independently or together with the nuclear forces of other services.”

It should be noted that the term “nuclear counterattack” in the context of China’s nuclear strategy generally means “nuclear retaliation to a first nuclear strike” or “second nuclear strike.”

Many experts and scholars are suspicious of China’s no-first-use pledge, with the Pentagon’s 2013 annual report on the Chinese military calling it ambiguous. But China’s nuclear force posture has all the features of a meaningful no-first-use policy. It has a much smaller and simpler arsenal with a much lower alert status than required for a first-use option.

Some security analysts challenge whether China can maintain its no-first-use pledge for some extreme scenarios, such as if an enemy uses conventional weapons to attack China’s nuclear arsenal. These analysts suggest China might consider a conventional attack the equivalent of a first nuclear strike and consequently initiate a retaliatory nuclear strike. However, in practice, since 1980, when it initiated China’s nuclear modernization, the PLASAF has focused on increasing the survivability of its nuclear force by deploying mobile missiles and moving missiles underground, to ensure that the country’s limited number of land-based strategic missiles can survive a first strike— nuclear or not.

Since 1985 China has built the tunnels of the underground great wall to protect its smaller nuclear arsenal and assure a reliable second-strike capability. The tunnels are reportedly hundreds of meters underground, deep in mountain areas, and difficult to detect from space. They are designed to withstand nuclear and conventional attacks. If Beijing believes its nuclear arsenal can survive a first nuclear strike, why not a conventional strike?

In fact, the PLASAF has also developed and deployed advanced conventional missiles including DF-21s that can attack aircraft carriers and penetrate regional missile defense systems. These new conventional forces should make Chinese leaders more confident and less reliant on nuclear weapons to deal with conventional attacks.

In fact, there is no evidence that China will change its long-standing no-first-use nuclear doctrine. Since its first nuclear explosion in 1964, China has consistently adhered to a nuclear policy that features a minimum deterrent and a no-first-use pledge, both aimed at avoiding a costly nuclear arms race.

This policy has been based on Chinese leaders’ perception of the nature and role of nuclear weapons and has been continuously embraced by top Chinese leaders, from Mao Zedong until today. As Mao stated a few months after China’s first nuclear test: “We don’t wish to have too many atomic bombs ourselves. What would we do with so many? To have a few is just fine.”

China’s nuclear policy has proven to be effective and smart, providing savings that can be used on economic development. As its conventional capabilities grow, Beijing should have more confidence to pursue firmly and unshakably its nuclear policy rather than follow the road of U.S. and Russia’s nuclear development. It is unthinkable that China would change its policy to pursue extremely expensive weapons parity with the superpowers.

In fact, to make substantial progress towards President Obama’s goal of a nuclear-free world, each nuclear weapon state must change its strategic doctrine from one based on preemption to a purely defensive one based on a no-first-use policy. This will provide a solid base to promote further reductions of nuclear weapons.

A no-first-use policy could also be an important measure to strengthen the nonproliferation regime, as no-first-use pledges would discourage other states from seeking nuclear weapons by removing a basic proliferation incentive while deemphasizing the role of such weapons. If the nuclear weapons states truly intend to take steps toward a nuclear-free world, it is time for them to adopt a global agreement on no-first-use of nuclear weapons. □



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The Risk of Nuclear Weapons and Current Progress Towards Abolition

By Andrew Kanter, Ira Helfand, and John Burroughs*

Nuclear weapons continue to pose an existential threat to human civilization. Their elimination must be our highest priority if we hope to bequeath a sustainable world to our children.

During the Cold War it was generally understood that a large scale war between the US and the Soviet Union would be a disaster not just for them, but for the entire planet. With the fall of the Berlin Wall there has been a dramatic decline in our awareness of the danger of nuclear war, but the weapons have not gone away. There remain nearly 20,000 nuclear warheads in the arsenals of the world and there is no indication that the nuclear weapons states intend to eliminate these weapons.

Important data coming from sophisticated climate models in the last few years makes it clear that even a very limited nuclear war, as might take place in a regional war between India and Pakistan, would also be a catastrophe for all humanity. A report issued last year by Physicians for Social Responsibility and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War summarized the recent studies on limited nuclear war. [1]

The scenario considered assumed that India and Pakistan each use 50 Hiroshima-sized bombs. The scenario shows that immediate effects include the death of over 20 million people by the explosions, firestorms and prompt radiation effects, and much of South Asia is contaminated with radiation. This is well known.

What is less well known is that 5 million tons of soot are injected into the upper atmosphere, quickly dropping global temperatures an average of 1.3o C and reducing precipitation worldwide for 10 years. This global climate disruption leads to catastrophic declines in food production. Studies reviewed in the report show a 12% decline in US corn production and a 15% decline in Chinese middle season rice production for an entire decade. More recent studies, which have not yet been published, show even more severe declines for other key crops in China: corn decreases by 20%, spring wheat by 40%, and winter wheat, the second largest grain crop in China, by 60% all for a full 10 years.

There are today some 870 million people who are malnourished at baseline; an additional 300 million live in countries that are dependent on food imports. All of these people would be at risk of starvation in the famine that would follow this limited nuclear war. And the, as yet unpublished data on Chinese grains other than rice, raises the specter of previously unanticipated, widespread famine in China as well.

It is not just the arsenals of India and Pakistan that can cause this catastrophe. Each US Trident submarine can carry up to 96 warheads, each 10 to 30 times more powerful than the Hiroshima bombs used in the nuclear famine scenario. Each is capable of causing this catastrophe many times over.

The more widespread use of the US and Russian arsenals, whether by design or accident, would cause an even greater disaster. A 2002 study by PSR showed that if only 300 warheads in the Russian arsenal reached targets in the US 75 to 100 million people would die in the first half hour and the entire economic infrastructure on which the rest of the population depends would be destroyed. [2]

The climate disruption would be even more catastrophic. A war involving only those warheads still allowed to the US and Russia when New START is fully implemented in 2018 would loft 150 million tons of soot into the atmosphere dropping global temperatures an average of 8oC. In the interior of North America and Eurasia, temperatures would drop 25o to 30o C producing conditions not seen on Earth in 18,000 years (since the coldest point in the last ice age). ☹

*Andrew Kanter is a co-regional vice president of IPPNW for North America; Ira Helfand is co-president of IPPNW and serves on the board of the US affiliate, Physicians for Social Responsibility; John Burroughs is executive director of the Lawyers Committee for Nuclear Policy and director of the UN Office of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms.

1. Nuclear Famine: A Billion People at Risk
2. Helfand I, et al. Projected US casualties and destruction of medical services from attacks by Russian nuclear forces. *Medicine and Global Survival* Vol. 7 No. 2, 2002



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In the temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere, there would be at least 2 years without a single day free of frost. All agriculture would stop and the vast majority of the human race would starve. This recent data confirms earlier simulations in the 1980's that prompted the name "nuclear winter", but this would be a winter that the human race would not survive.

Whatever progress we make sustainable development will be for naught if we do not eliminate nuclear weapons and the immediate threat they pose to our common survival. The current pace of their elimination is not sufficient to guarantee our survival. As described above, even a small number of these weapons pose an unacceptable risk to the planet. We have managed to survive through luck, and there have been instances where a nuclear war nearly was launched, either accidentally or by intent.

In 2005, at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference, little progress was made by the nuclear weapons states to reduce their arsenals and some ground was even lost. The Committee on Disarmament has been stalled for years. Civil society committed itself to an alternate path to ensuring our survival. In 2007, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) launched the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) that is now active in 60 countries. This campaign advocates for banning and eliminating nuclear weapons because of the humanitarian consequences of their use.

In May 2010, the five-year nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference for the first time expressed "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons."

In November 2011, the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement adopted a resolution whose first two operative provisions state that the Council: (1) emphasizes the incalculable human suffering that can be expected to result from any use of nuclear weapons, the lack of any adequate humanitarian response capacity and the absolute imperative to prevent such use, and (2) finds it difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian law.

In October 2012, 34 United Nations (UN) member states, plus an observer state, the Holy See, made a "Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Dimension of Nuclear Disarmament" in the UN General Assembly's First Committee on Disarmament and International Security. The Joint Statement quotes the position on incompatibility of use of nuclear weapons with IHL set forth in the resolution of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

In March 2013, the Government of Norway sponsored a diplomatic conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, which was preceded by an ICAN civil society forum in Oslo.

Representatives of 127 countries attended the diplomatic conference. Of note, the P5 boycotted as a group with a scripted response that they felt that the focus on humanitarian consequences was a distraction. In Oslo, for the first time, UN agencies, from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to the UN Development Programme, confirmed that international help for the survivors of even a single nuclear explosion in an urban area would be far from adequate. Of course nothing could be done for those already killed by the blast, heat, radiation, and firestorm effects, numbering in the tens or hundreds of thousands.

The IPPNW report and ICRC positions were shared with the delegates, many of whom had not heard this information before, and they renewed vows to pursue the global elimination of nuclear weapons. At the meeting's close, Mexico announced that it will host a follow-up conference, which is expected to take place early in 2014. This process paralleled similar processes around the banning of landmines (Ottawa) and cluster munitions (Oslo) and has raised hopes that similar progress can finally be made regarding nuclear weapons.

At the NPT PrepCom just held in Geneva, 80 governments signed on to the Joint Statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, read by Amb. Abdul Minty of South Africa. It said regarding the Oslo conference: "The broad participation at the Conference reflects the recognition that the catastrophic effects of a detonation are of concern and relevance to all." It declared: "It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances. The catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed. All efforts must be exerted to eliminate this threat. The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination." ☺



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It is clear that there is new momentum to finally achieve the abolition of nuclear weapons. The recent medical and environmental data shows that these weapons are not only homicidal, but they are ecocidal. Their presence poses an unacceptable risk to all life on this planet and their elimination must be a primary goal if we are to achieve a sustainable, healthy and happy future for all Humankind.

At the ICAN presentation during the governmental conference, Nosizwe Baqwa, ICAN coordinator for Norway, said:

“That nuclear weapons have not already been clearly declared illegal –to sit, outdated, alongside the other weapons of mass destruction – Is a failure of our collective social responsibility. The time has come for committed states to correct that failure.”

For the first time in many years, it appears that we might just be able to do that. ☐

Source <> <http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2013/05/22/sustainable-world/>

Links:

<http://www.ippnw.org/pdf/nuclear-famine-ippnw-0412.pdf>

<http://www.ippnw.org/pdf/mgs/7-2-helfand.pdf>

<http://www.icanw.org/>

<http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/resolution/council-delegates-resolution-1-2011.htm>

<http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2012/10/24/humanitarian-statement-fc/>

<http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2013/03/04/ippnw-oslo/>

<http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2013/04/24/74-npt-states-issue-humanitarian-appeal-for-abolition/>

NPT: Toothless in the Face of Real World Dangers

By Dr REBECCA JOHNSON*

The core purpose of the NPT was security and the prevention of nuclear war, but the esoteric diplomacy of the current regime has become too far removed from the dangerous and messy world of today's nuclear risks and ambitions. Rebecca Johnson reports at the close of the NPT meeting in Geneva.

The final day of the second PrepCom for the 2015 Review Conference of parties to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) had been expected to go smoothly, but things got off to a late start due to objections by some states. Two documents needed to be addressed. One was the PrepCom's report that simply details the administrative facts and decisions. The other was the "factual summary" that the presiding Chair is required to present, which is supposed to capture the substantive essence of the meeting, as distilled from nine days of statements and 48 working papers. Having assisted a previous Chair in writing such a summary, I know only too well how difficult it is to get this right. States are nationally egotistical, so they look first at whether their points have been adequately covered, and of course a summary snapshot can seldom give due weight to all the proposals, ideas, complexities and subtleties.

As the expressions of appreciation from many delegations attested, in many ways the Romanian Chair, Ambassador Cornel Feruta, did a valiant job of describing basic disagreements and weighting different perspectives. But the main omission that struck everyone was that neither the summary nor the draft report mentioned that Egypt had walked out in protest on the sixth day of the meeting. Unprecedented in the NPT's history, this needed to be reflected. ☹

*Dr Rebecca Johnson is Co-Chair of ICAN and Executive Director of the London-based Acronym Institute for Disarmament and Diplomacy. A former senior adviser to the Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission and vice-chair of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, she is also Vice-President of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the United Kingdom and a special adviser to the Nobel Women's Initiative.

This article was originally published on Open Democracy and is the final piece of analysis by Rebecca Johnson from the 2013 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting in Geneva, April 22 - May 3, 2013.



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Egypt's action had been undertaken as a warning shot across the NPT's bow, to draw attention to the mounting frustration among the Arab states over the postponement of the 2012 Conference on the Middle East. Being ignored in the draft report and summary was perceived as adding insult to injury. Tense exchanges between the Chair and key protagonists found a solution in the time-honoured device of an oral amendment, in which Feruta proposed an additional sentence to the paragraph that listed the 106 participating states, noting Egypt's announcement on 29 April that it would not attend the rest of the meeting.

In considering the Chair's draft summary most states looked at what was said on their particular initiatives and interests. In 99 paragraphs, it was not easy to do justice to widely divergent views put forward by the nuclear-armed states and most if not all the non-nuclear participants. While delegations from various sides put on record their disagreements with how some elements had been written up, most also paid tribute to Feruta's "hard work and tireless efforts" and "fair and inclusive manner".

Nonetheless, several delegations, including Mexico, South Africa, Singapore and also Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned states parties, emphasised that there had been no negotiations on the text, and sought Feruta's assurance that his Chair's summary would not be attached to the PrepCom report in a formal capacity. Feruta confirmed that the summary would be issued as a working paper only, but hoped it would be of assistance to the Chair of the third PrepCom, Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey of Peru, and the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

In this regard, it was noteworthy that the "deep concerns" about the "catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" were reflected early on, together with references to the March 2013 Oslo conference and the follow-on that will be hosted by Mexico early next year. However, a number of states were unhappy that the Chair's summary had not explicitly recognised the fact that 80 NPT states parties (more than previously reported due to late additions) had co-sponsored the 'Joint Statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons', an unprecedented 75 percent of the participating delegations. Old habits seem to die hard, for the summary featured the joint statement of 4.7 percent of the meeting (five nuclear-armed states parties) ahead of the 80-nation joint statement on humanitarian impacts, conveying outdated assumptions about the relative status and importance of those with and those without nuclear weapons in today's security environment.

Taking the floor to thank Feruta for his "able stewardship", Ambassador Abdul Minty of South Africa took the opportunity to underline that "hardly any delegation disagreed" with the importance of the humanitarian concerns addressed in the joint statement. He continued: "Given the unacceptable harm that would be visited upon humanity from any use of nuclear weapons, all States Parties agree on the need to ensure that these weapons are never used again." Acknowledging that the "only way to guarantee this is through their total elimination", South Africa (which eliminated its own nuclear arsenal in 1990-92) argued that it is "a shared responsibility of all States to prevent their vertical and horizontal proliferation and to achieve nuclear disarmament..." Ambassador Minty also thanked and paid tribute to "the crucial role of civil society in creating awareness about this issue".

Pairs of opposing views characterised much of the Chair's summary. For example, "many states parties expressed concern that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be inconsistent with fundamental rules of international humanitarian law", while "some nuclear-weapon states (NWS) outlined that under their respective national policies any use of nuclear weapons would only be considered in extreme circumstances..." And "many states parties stressed the need for the negotiation of a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame, including a nuclear weapons convention"; while the NWS "provided information on their efforts to implement their disarmament commitment" and "reaffirmed the contribution of the pragmatic step-by-step process to nuclear disarmament and stressed the validity of this route". This might have sounded more reassuring were it not for the fact that "certain NWS parties noted they are not pursuing new missions or new capabilities for their nuclear forces". This fact served mainly to accentuate awareness of the dog that didn't bark – that certain other nuclear-armed parties gave no such assurances, probably because they are pursuing new nuclear capabilities and missions. Iran's Ambassador Ali Soltanieh, commenting at the end, explicitly raised concerns about "Trident and new nuclear weapons" undermining the NPT.

The good news was that US-Russian steps to implement the New START treaty were "welcomed" and these two former superpowers were "encouraged to continue negotiations to achieve greater reductions in their nuclear arsenals, including non-strategic nuclear weapons". Sadly this didn't get everyone off the hook. ☹



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Though the UK and France were credited with providing information on “planned reductions”, this came after concerns were expressed by “many” that “the total estimated number of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, still amounted to several thousands”. And so the Chair’s summary continued, juxtaposing the concerns of the “many” with information provided by “some” or “certain” states parties. “Many” remained “deeply concerned at the maintenance of many nuclear weapons on high alert”, while “many” were also concerned about “the continued role of nuclear weapons in national and regional military doctrines”. This view contrasted in the same paragraph with: “Some states affirmed that they had reduced the role of nuclear weapons in their strategic doctrines”; as well as “some States parties called for the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons which continued to be stationed outside the territories” of the NWS.

The report skimmed through all sorts of other concerns – years of “stalemate” in the Conference on Disarmament; that the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty’s entry into force is still impeded by 8 states; that the safeguards system on nuclear materials under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) still needs strengthening; the “threat of terrorism and the risk that non-State actors might acquire nuclear weapons and their means of delivery”. Then there were some positive mentions of nuclear weapons free zones (NWFZ), though we were sternly reminded that such NWFZ “did not substitute for legal obligations and unequivocal undertakings of the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals”.

And so to the Middle East, where Feruta’s summary of the statements and working papers was tactfully pitched. The Facilitator, Jaakko Laajava of Finland, was given “appreciation” for his “tireless efforts”, and “a number of states parties expressed support for the Facilitator’s efforts for multilateral preparatory consultations involving the States of the region”. At the same time, “States parties expressed disappointment and regret at the postponement of the 2012 Conference”. Reference was given to “appreciation for the constructive engagement of the Arab states” and their collective “position paper” on the “organization, agenda, outcome document, working methods and other issues related to the Conference”. Though the Arab states were clearly unhappy with how the weight of the Middle East debates were reflected, Bahrain on their behalf expressed “heartfelt thanks” to Feruta for his efforts. Iran at one point complained that the very process of producing a summary requires selection and bias, and argued for stopping the practice altogether and relying solely on states parties’ statements and working papers, but no-one rose to this bait.

In addition to some routine paragraphs on “peaceful uses” on nuclear energy, more significant concerns were raised on nuclear safety, security, civil nuclear liability, treaty reform and withdrawal. The summary went through the rituals of calling on Israel, India and Pakistan to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear states. North Korea’s recent nuclear and missile tests were condemned, and it was urged to “fulfil its commitments under the Six Party Talks” and “return at an early date to the [NPT] and to its NPT safeguards agreements with the IAEA”, once again fudging the fact that the NPT has demonstrated an abject inability to address either the legal or the substantive challenges of North Korea’s announced withdrawal from the treaty in 2003.

With a smattering of applause and a large measure of relief, this latest instalment in the almost annual ritual of NPT meetings closed. Business was done, the wheels were turned, there had been much meeting, talking, lobbying, caucusing and arguing about substance and future steps, (more honestly in the fringe meetings than formal sessions) meetings. Hundreds of statements had been read, with a new ‘papersmart’ initiative ensuring that these and the working papers and relevant documents were available electronically far more quickly than ever before.

Yet, amidst all this “output”, the NPT seems to be locked inside a bubble of diplomatic fantasy and failing to tackle the real world dangers posed by nuclear technologies and practices and the nuclear arsenals and policies of all nine nuclear-armed governments. Whether legally recognised as outside the NPT or regarded as a state party in flagrant non-compliance, North Korea’s acquisition of nuclear capabilities serve as a constant reminder of the NPT’s toothlessness where it matters. Similarly, whether inside or outside the NPT, the other eight nuclear-armed states behave as free-riders on the regime, benefiting from its constraints on others while the treaty serves as a smokescreen for them to carry on producing and deploying nuclear weapons without due regard for the security and interests of their neighbours.

The core purpose of the NPT was security and the prevention of nuclear war, but the esoteric diplomacy of the current regime has become too far removed from the dangerous and messy world of today’s nuclear risks and ambitions. South Africa’s Ambassador Minty spoke for most NPT members when he urged: “humanitarian concerns should be at the core of all our reflections, decisions and actions during this [NPT] Review Cycle and beyond”. □



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Veteran Peace Activist Bruce Kent Calls For Papal Condemnation Of Nuclear Weapons

[May 17, 2013] - Veteran peace activist and former Catholic priest Bruce Kent, 83, has written to Pope Francis calling on him to condemn nuclear weapons worldwide. Citing the inaction of the UK's Catholic Bishops on the issue of Trident replacement, Bruce Kent asked the Pope to 'speak to the world about the elimination of war and all weapons of mass destruction.'

Bruce Kent, well known as Monsignor Kent during his time in the leadership of CND in the 1970s and 80s, has been touring the UK for over a month on his 'Scrap Trident Tour' - speaking out against the replacement of Britain's Trident nuclear weapon system.

He told the Pope that the £100 billion which would be spent on replacing Trident would be 'a theft from those who hunger and are not fed' - citing President Eisenhower.

Kent went on to say that there has been 'consistent Catholic opposition to nuclear weapons of mass destruction that goes back to Pope John's Pacem in Terris but which now needs restating.'

While other Christian groups in the UK have come out against Trident replacement, such as the Methodist, Baptist, United Reformed Churches and the Society of Friends, Kent asked Pope Francis to make clear the Catholic Church's opposition to nuclear weapons.

He concluded: 'The human race can and should live in peace, free from the threat of weapons of mass destruction which, as a result of accident and misunderstanding, have several times brought us close to disaster in the recent past.'

Source <> <http://www.cnduk.org/cnd-media/item/1672-letter-to-pope-veteran-peace-activist-bruce-kent-calls-for-papal-condemnation-of-nuclear-weapons>

The full letter can be downloaded here: <http://bit.ly/10ZtDhC>



Publisher: Global Cooperation Council (umbrella organisation of IPS-Inter Press Service Deutschland GmbH, Berlin)

SIG-IPS Project Director: Katsuhiko Asagiri, President IPS Japan, Tokyo

SIG-IPS Project Coordinator & Editor-in-Charge: Ramesh Jaura

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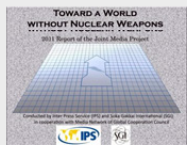


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