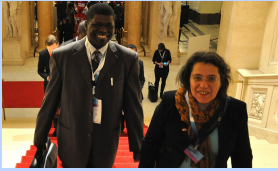


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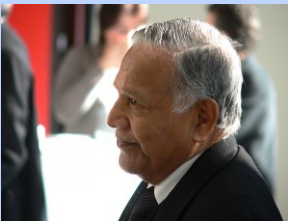
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‘Their Weapons Possess Them’



BERLIN | VIENNA - Nearly a thousand people crammed into the conference hall in the majestic Hofburg in Vienna for two full days of discussions on the unspeakable and unimaginable theme – the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. This was the third in a series of state-sponsored conferences taking place outside of the UN, the first two having taken place in Norway and Mexico. ➤ Pages 2-3

Faiths United Against Nuclear Weapons



VIENNA - “Never was there a greater need than now for all the religions to combine, to pull their wisdom and to give the benefit of that combined, huge repository of wisdom to international law and to the world.” The words are those of Christopher Weeramantry, former judge at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and its vice-president from 1997 to 2000, who was addressing a session on faiths united against nuclear weapons at the civil society forum organised by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on Dec. 6 and 7 in the Austrian capital. ➤ Pages 4-5

Nuclear States Face Barrage of Criticism in Vienna

VIENNA - Sarcastic laughter erupted when a civil society representative expressed his “admiration for the delegate of the United States, who with one insensitive, ill-timed, inappropriate and diplomatically inept intervention” had “managed to dispel the considerable goodwill the U.S. had garnered by its decision to participate” in Vienna Conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. ➤ Pages 6-7

Civil Society Support for Marshall Islands Against Nukes

VIENNA - Ahead of the Dec. 8-9 Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, activists from all over the world came together in the Austrian capital to participate in a civil society forum organised by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on Dec. 6 and 7. ➤ Pages 8-9

Survivors Aspire For A World Free Of Nuclear Weapons

SYDNEY - Sue Coleman-Haseldine, a Kokatha-Mula Indigenous woman, was about three years old when the United Kingdom began conducting Nuclear weapons tests in Australia’s Monte Bello Islands, off the Western Australian coast, and Emu Field and Maralinga in South Australia. ➤ Pages 10-11-12

What Others Say

Searching for Evidence of a Nuclear Test

VIENNA - The most sophisticated on-site inspection exercise conducted to date by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) formally concluded this month. The Integrated Field Exercise IFE14 in Jordan from Nov. 3 to Dec. 9 involved four years of preparation, 150 tonnes of specialised equipment and over 200 international experts. ➤ Pages 13-14

Hiroshima, Nagasaki Cast Shadow Over Nuclear Conference in Vienna

UNITED NATIONS - When Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was at Harvard University December 2 to pick up the ‘Humanitarian of the Year’ award, his thoughts transcended the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the venue of a key international conference in Vienna, Austria, on nuclear weapons. ➤ Pages 15-16-17

Civil Society Perspective ➤ Pages 18-19

Trident, Labour and Scotland | Nuclear States at the Vienna Conference

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‘Their Weapons Possess Them’

By XANTHE HALL*

“Possession does not prevent international disputes from occurring, but it makes conflicts more dangerous. Maintaining forces on alert does not provide safety, but it increases the likelihood of accidents. Upholding doctrines of nuclear deterrence does not counter proliferation, but it makes the weapons more desirable.” - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon.



BERLIN | VIENNA (IDN) - Nearly a thousand people crammed into the conference hall in the majestic Hofburg in Vienna for two full days of discussions on the unspeakable and unimaginable theme – the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. This was the third in a series of state-sponsored conferences taking place outside of the UN, the first two having taken place in Norway and Mexico.

The growing number of states taking part at these conferences is taken to be a sign of their effectiveness in both creating awareness about the unacceptable nature of nuclear weapons and building pressure for nuclear disarmament.

Nearly 160 states were represented, among them the United States and United Kingdom who were taking part for the first time, to the chagrin of Russia and France who resolutely continue to stay away. At the end of the conference, Austria pledged to work to close the “legal gap” that would lead to the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, inviting others to join them.

The Austrian Foreign Ministry pulled out all the stops for this conference. In the opening session, the young minister Sebastian Kurz called for a new momentum for concrete progress on global nuclear disarmament.

High level messages from the UN Secretary-General and the Pope set the tone. Pope Francis encouraged nuclear weapons' victims to be “prophetic voices” warning of the potential to destroy “us and the civilisation”.

A long list of prominent figures sent a letter to the Austrian Foreign Minister sharing the belief that the risks posed by nuclear weapons are underestimated and need to be reduced. The President of the [International Committee of the Red Cross](#) said that new studies confirmed their already-stated conclusion that there could be no adequate help or relief in case of a nuclear explosion.

Setsuko Thurlow related her personal story of loss and suffering as a Hibakusha (nuclear bomb survivor) and the whole room suffered with her.

"A is for atom, B is for bomb. C is for cancer, D is for death"

The opening session thereby introduced the main themes of the conference that were then covered in depth in the following sessions on the impact of nuclear weapons' explosions, nuclear testing, risks, and scenarios. ➡

*Xanthe Hall is Disarmament Campaigner of [IPPNW Deutschland](#) | [IPPNW Germany](#).

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Scientific presentations were interspersed with testimonials from “downwinders” (victims of nuclear testing). Wheelchair-bound Michelle Thomas from “HEAL” in Utah gave an impassioned speech about growing up in the radioactive midst of over 100 above-ground nuclear tests and how her community became ravaged by cancer and other illnesses. She spoke of embarrassment at her mother's activism until she herself realised that it was not the Cold War enemy but “Our own country was bombing the hell out of us”. People asked her if she was not afraid to speak out so strongly against the government. She replied: “they already killed me”.

During the Q&A session following three testimonials from women on the destruction of their land, subsistence and health, the U.S. representative made a severe error of judgement. He made a speech, despite the Chair clearly telling states not to do so until the following day. The U.S. representative chose not to apologise to the Downwinders for their suffering, but to make it clear to all in the room that they were not planning on diverting from their “to-do” list of steps in order to increase momentum for nuclear disarmament.

On the second day of the conference, a panel on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) concluded that the use of nuclear weapons would contravene existing IHL and environmental law, even though no specific ban is in place. A fascinating talk by Nobuo Hayashi of Oslo University delved into the ethical and moral dimensions and concluded that, like torture – which was on everyone's minds that day after the publication of the Senate report – nuclear weapons are “too cruel to tolerate”. Now that “we no longer live in an era when humankind felt compelled to take itself hostage for its own survival” it is an opportune moment to relieve ourselves of this unnecessary suffering.

The political statement section took five hours to slog through, without a lunch break and for some of the time without translation. 100 states took the floor to share their thoughts and their conclusions. Now and again the tedium of the occasion was broken up by a civil society statement, most notably from the Wildfire's ‘Chief Inflammatory Officer’ Richard Lelanne who pleaded with the non-nuclear weapon states to stop whining and get on with banning nuclear weapons on their own.

The so-called “weasel states” (those under the nuclear “umbrella” of the U.S.) were greeted by a giant weasel that appeared in the foyer when they stepped out for some refreshments. Lelanne likened the nuclear-armed states to alcoholics, possessed by their weapons, and urged nuclear weapon-free states not to support their habit. The ICAN statement was presented by the young director of ICAN Austria Nadja Schmidt who called for a process “open to all and blockable by none” leading to a ban on nuclear weapons.

The humanitarian initiative aims to put the effects of nuclear weapons at the centre of the debate rather than national security interests and these conferences have been effective in achieving that for the large part.

Ukraine, however, was so caught up in its present conflict that it was unable to step outside its own box and indulged instead in a verbal attack on Russia.

The United Kingdom went as far as to say that the humanitarian effects were already clear in 1968 and that a ban or a timetable for elimination would endanger strategic stability, so that they planned to hang on to their missiles for “as long as necessary”.

The “Austrian Pledge” was the main outcome of the conference – a tool that allows countries to signify their preparedness to begin a process leading to the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

It is unlikely that much more than this could be achieved before the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in Spring 2015. But unless there is an outcome from the conference in New York, which many hold to be unlikely, Austria may be able to use the support amassed through its Pledge to kick-start negotiations on a treaty, with or without the nuclear-armed states. Given that the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki will be commemorated for the 70th time next year, that might be an apt time for talks on a ban to begin. [IDN-InDepthNews – December 11, 2014] ✓

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Faiths United Against Nuclear Weapons

By JULIA RAINER

VIENNA (IPS) - “Never was there a greater need than now for all the religions to combine, to pull their wisdom and to give the benefit of that combined, huge repository of wisdom to international law and to the world.”



The words are those of Christopher Weeramantry, former judge at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and its vice-president from 1997 to 2000, who was addressing a session on faiths united against nuclear weapons at the civil society forum organised by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on Dec. 6 and 7 in the Austrian capital.

Weeramantry strongly criticised the argument of those who claim that nuclear weapons have saved the world from another world war in the last 50 years.

He pointed to the ever-present danger represented by these weapons and said that on many occasions it had been luck that had prevented catastrophic nuclear accidents or the breaking out of a devastating nuclear war.

Noting that nuclear weapons “offend every single principle of religion,” Weeramantry was joined on the panel by a number of different religious leaders, including Mustafa Cerić, Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ela Gandhi, granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi and peace activist, as well as Akemi Bailey-Haynie, national women’s leader of the Buddhist organisation Soka Gakkai International-USA.

Although there often seems to be a gap between the positions of different faith communities concerning different issues, all panellists were very clear in pushing the moral imperative and declaring the similar values that are inherent to all religions.

According to Mustafa Cerić, it “is not the question of whether you believe, it is the question of whether we are going to wait and see the destruction of our planet.”

Cerić also stressed that the goals and values of humanity are defined by common moral and ethical standards and that the role of religious communities today is greater than ever. Faced with fear and mistrust in society, he said, they also have the responsibility to care for peace and security in the world.

Akemi Bailey-Haynie continued with an emotional statement from first-hand experience – her own mother was a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing in 1945.

“When nuclear weapons are considered a deterrent or viable option in warfare, it seems from a mind-set that fundamentally denies that all people possess infinite potential. No one has the right to take away a precious life of another human being.” ➔

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For Bailey-Haynie, nuclear weapons serve no purpose other than mass destruction. They have devastating effects on human beings and the environment, and the possibility of nuclear accidents or potential terrorism cannot be ruled out, she said, adding that dialogue between people of different or opposing opinions is the beginning to achieve change regarding this issue.

“As a second generation survivor, I deeply feel the sorrow, as well as the outrage, born of not being able to yet live in a time when the most inhumane of weapons, nuclear weapons, have been banned,” she concluded.

Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Laureate and former Anglican Bishop, sent a video message to participants to express his deep solidarity and support for ICAN’s civil society forum initiative.

He argued that the best way to honour the victims of the incidents in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was to negotiate a total ban on nuclear weapons to ensure that nothing comparable could ever happen again.

Two of the session’s speakers, Ela Gandhi and Mustafa Ceric, also attended the Dec. 8-9 Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons.

There, Ela Gandhi delivered a speech in the spirit of her grandfather who, she said, would have joined the movement to abolish nuclear weapons if still alive.

As Gandhi had dedicated his life to teaching humanity that there is a non-violent way of dealing with conflict, he even condemned nuclear weapons himself in 1946 when he said: “The atom bomb mentality is immoral, unethical, addictive and only evil can come from it.”

Pointing out that the mere existence of nuclear weapons leads to similar armament of rival countries, Ela Gandhi warned that these nuclear arsenals could destroy a chance for future generations to survive and have a prosperous life.

The Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons was the scene of intense and often emotional discussions among official representatives from over 160 countries, victims and civil society participants. Notably, both the United States and the United Kingdom were officially represented for the first time at a conference where their nuclear arsenals were subject to debate and criticism.

Religion played an important role at the conference, where many lobbying groups had religious backgrounds, and the opening ceremony was addressed by Pope Francis.

“I am convinced that the desire for peace and fraternity, planted deep in the human heart, will bear fruit in concrete ways to ensure that nuclear weapons are banned once and for all, to the benefit of our common home,” said Pope Francis, expressing his hope that “a world without nuclear weapons is truly possible.”

In a statement on behalf of faith communities to the final session, Kimiaki Kawai, Program Director for Peace Affairs at Soka Gakkai International (SGI), said: “The elimination of nuclear weapons is not only a moral imperative; it is the ultimate measure of our worth as a species, as human beings.”

He said that “acceptance of the continued existence of nuclear weapons stifles our capacity to think more broadly and more compassionately about who we are as human beings, and what our potential is. Humanity must find alternative ways of dealing with conflict.” (IPS | December 10, 2014) ☑

Photo on page 4: Former ICJ judge Christopher Weeramantry. Credit: Henning Blatt, Wikimedia

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Nuclear States Face Barrage of Criticism in Vienna

By JAMSHED BARUAH

VIENNA (IPS) - Sarcastic laughter erupted when a civil society representative expressed his “admiration for the delegate of the United States, who with one insensitive, ill-timed, inappropriate and diplomatically inept intervention” had “managed to dispel the considerable goodwill the U.S. had garnered by its decision to participate” in Vienna Conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons.



The speaker was Richard Lennane, who prefers to call himself the “chief inflammatory officer” of [Wildfire](#), a Geneva-based disarmament initiative. He was making a statement at the final session of the Dec. 8-9 conference in the Austrian capital – the third after the Oslo (Norway) gathering in 2013 and Nayarit (Mexico) earlier this year.

“The consequences of any nuclear weapon use would be devastating, long-lasting, and unacceptable. Governments simply cannot listen to this evidence and hear these human stories without acting.” -- Akira Kawasaki of Peaceboat

Unlike the previous conferences, the United States and Britain – two of the five members of the nuclear club, along with France, Russia and China – participated in the Vienna conference.

But Washington’s diplomatic jargon was far-removed from the highly emotional impact of statements by survivors of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and of nuclear testing in Australia, Kazakhstan, and the Marshall Islands. They gave powerful testimonies of the horrific effects of nuclear weapons. Their evidence complemented other presentations offering data and research.

Ambassador Adam Scheinman, special representative of the U.S. president for non-proliferation, assured that “underpinning all of our efforts, stretching back decades, has been our clear understanding of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons use”.

This claim not only left a large number of participants unimpressed but also failed to give reason for hope that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review conference next year would bear fruit.

All the more so, because as the U.S.-based [Arms Control Association](#), [Institute for Energy and Environmental Research](#), [Nuclear Information Project](#) of the Federation of American Scientists, [Physicians for Social Responsibility](#), and the [Union of Concerned Scientists](#) pointed out in a [joint statement](#), “nearly five years after the successful 2010 NPT review conference, follow-through on the consensus action plan – particularly the 22 interrelated disarmament steps – has been very disappointing.

“Since the entry into force of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) in 2011,” the statement added, “Russia and the United States have failed to start talks to further reduce their still enormous nuclear stockpiles, which far exceed any plausible deterrence requirements.” ➡

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2015 will also mark the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the consequences of which are still being felt by hibakusha (survivors) and their families, as Setsuko Thurlow, Hiroshima Peace Ambassador and survivor of the atomic bombing explosion on Aug. 6, 1945, illustrated in an impassioned statement.

“The consequences of any nuclear weapon use would be devastating, long-lasting, and unacceptable. Governments simply cannot listen to this evidence and hear these human stories without acting,” said Akira Kawasaki, from the Japanese NGO Peaceboat. “The only solution is to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons and we need to start now,” Kawasaki added.

U.S. ambassador Scheinman sought to reassure in a statement prepared for the general debate: “The United States fully understands the serious consequences of nuclear weapons use and gives the highest priority to avoiding their use. The United States stands with all those here who seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. “The United States has been and will continue to work to create the conditions for such a world with the aid of the various tools, treaties and agreements, including the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime.”

Irrespective of the veracity of the U.S. claim, Scheinman’s dry and rather formulaic remarks stood in stark contrast to passionate pleas made by representatives of 44 out of 158 participating states, that as long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their use by design, miscalculation or madness, technical or human error remains real.

States that expressed support for a ban treaty at the Vienna Conference include: Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Burundi, Chad, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea Bissau, Holy See, Indonesia, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Philippines, Qatar, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Senegal, South Africa, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Echoing worldwide sentiments, Pope Francis called in a message to the conference for nuclear weapons to be “banned once and for all”. In a message delivered by Angela Kane, High Representative of the U.N. Office for Disarmament Affairs, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon said that the Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna initiatives had “brought humanitarian considerations to the forefront of nuclear disarmament. It has energized civil society and governments alike. It has compelled us to keep in mind the horrific consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons.”

Questioning the rationale behind nuclear weapons, Ban – who is known to be committed to nuclear disarmament – said that keeping the horrific consequences of nukes in mind was essential in confronting those who view nuclear weapons as a rational response to growing international tensions or as a symbol of national prestige.

In his widely noted message, he criticised “the senselessness of pouring funds into modernizing the means for our mutual destruction while we are failing to meet the challenges posed by poverty, climate change, extremism and the destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms.”

In “the 70th year of the nuclear age”, Ban said “possession of nuclear weapons does not prevent international disputes from occurring, but it makes conflicts more dangerous”. Besides, he added, maintaining forces on alert does not provide safety, but it increases the likelihood of accidents. Upholding doctrines of nuclear deterrence does not counter proliferation, but it makes the weapons more desirable.

Growing ranks of nuclear armed-states do not ensure global stability, but instead undermine it – a view with which also faith organisations gathered in Vienna agreed. (IPS | December 10, 2014) ☑

Photo on page 6: Delegates at the Dec. 8-9 Vienna Conference on Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. Credit: Ippnw Deutschland/cc by 2.0

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Civil Society Support for Marshall Islands Against Nukes

By JULIA RAINER

VIENNA (IPS) - Ahead of the Dec. 8-9 Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, activists from all over the world came together in the Austrian capital to participate in a civil society forum organised by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) on Dec. 6 and 7.



One pressing issue discussed was the Marshall Islands' lawsuit against the United States and eight other nuclear-weapon nations that was filed at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in April 2014, denouncing the over 60 nuclear tests that were conducted on the small island state's territory between 1946 and 1958.

The location was chosen not only because it was an isolated part of the world but also because at the time it was also a [Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands](#) governed by the United States. Self-government was achieved in 1979, and full sovereignty in 1986.

The people of the Marshall Islands were neither informed nor asked for their consent and for a long period did not realise the harm that the testing

would bring to the local communities.

The consequences were severe, ranging from displacement of people to islands that were strongly radiated and cannot be resettled for thousands of years, besides birth abnormalities and cancer. The states responsible denied the harm of the practice and refuse to provide for adequate amount of health care.

Castle Bravo was the code name given to the first United States' test of a nuclear bomb in 1954 and was 1000 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945.

Addressing the ICAN forum, Marshall Islands Foreign Minister Tony de Brum explained that his country had decided to approach the ICJ to take a stand for a world free of nuclear weapons.

De Brum said that the Marshall Islands was not seeking compensation, because the United States had already provided millions of dollars to the islands, but wants to hold states accountable for their actions in violating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and international customary law.

Image: Mushroom cloud over Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands from Castle Bravo, the largest nuclear test ever conducted by the United States. Credit: United States Department of Energy [Public domain] via Wikimedia Commons ↻

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The NPT, which entered into force in 1970, commits nuclear-weapon states to nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear power. The nine countries currently holding nuclear arsenals are the United States, United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea and Israel.

Although a certain degree of disarmament has been taken place since the end of the Cold War, these nine nations together still possess some 17,000 nuclear weapons and globally spend 100 billion dollars a year on nuclear forces.

The Marshall Islands case, which has received worldwide attention and support from many different organisations, is often referred to as “David vs. Goliath”. One eminent supporter is the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (NAPF), whose president, David Krieger, said: “The Marshall Islands is a small, gutsy country. It is not a country that will be bullied, nor is it one that will give up.”

“It knows what is at stake with nuclear weapons,” he continued, “and is fighting in the courtroom for humanity’s survival. The people of the Marshall Islands deserve our support and appreciation for taking this fight into the U.S. Federal Court and to the International Court of Justice, the highest court in the world.”

Another strong supporter of the case is Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Buddhist organisation that advocates for peace, culture and education and has a network of 12 million people all over the world. The youth movement of SGI even launched a “Nuclear Zero” petition and obtained five million signatures throughout Japan in its demand for a world free of nuclear weapons.

The campaign was encouraged by the upcoming 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2015 as well as the holding of the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

Addressing the ICAN, de Brum urged participants to support the cause of the Marshall Islands. “For a long time,” he said, “the Marshallese people did not have a voice strong enough or loud enough for the world to hear what happened to them and they desperately don’t want it to happen to anyone else.”

He went on to say that when the opportunity arose to file a lawsuit in order to stop “the madness of nuclear weapons”, the Marshall Islands decided to take that step, declaring in its lawsuit: “If not us, who? If not now, when?”

De Brum recognised that many had discouraged his country from taking that step because it would look ridiculous or did not make sense for a nation of 70,000 people to take on the most powerful nations in the world on such a highly debated issue.

However, he said, “there is not a single citizen on the Marshall Islands that has not had an encounter with one or another effect of the testing period ... because we have experienced directly the effects of nuclear weapons we felt that we had the mandate to do what we have done.”

The Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons is the third in a series of such conferences – the first was held in Oslo, Norway, in March 2013 and the second in Nayarit, Mexico, in February 2014. (IPS | December 9, 2014) ☑

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Survivors Aspire For A World Free Of Nuclear Weapons

By NEENA BHANDARI*

SYDNEY (IDN) - Sue Coleman-Haseldine, a Kokatha-Mula Indigenous woman, was about three years old when the United Kingdom began conducting Nuclear weapons tests in Australia's Monte Bello Islands, off the Western Australian coast, and Emu Field and Maralinga in South Australia.



Photo: Nuclear test survivor Sue Coleman-Haseldine | Credit: Jessie Boylan

The 12 major tests, conducted between 1952 and 1963, contaminated a huge area, including Koonibba, the place where Sue's family and larger community lived.

"There were Aboriginal people living in the region when the tests started. Many people died and became sick in the immediate test areas. The first atomic bomb called 'Totem 1' spread far and wide and there are stories about the 'black mist' it created which killed, blinded and made people very sick," says Sue, who remembers elders in the community telling her about the healthy life of hunting for wild game and collecting bush fruits prior to the tests.

"Older people in our community talked about the Nullarbor dust storms, but it was the fallout from the Maralinga tests. We weren't on ground zero, but the dust didn't stay in one place. It went wherever the winds took it. People were dying of cancer, something that was new to us," recalls Sue, who learnt about the radiation fallout while attending a meeting of the [Australian Nuclear Free Alliance \(ANFA\)](#).

Aboriginal people formed ANFA, formerly the Alliance Against Uranium, in 1997. They were joined by some NGOs concerned about existing or proposed nuclear developments in Australia, particularly on Indigenous homelands. ➔

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For Aboriginal people, the land is the basis of their culture. Sue was devastated to learn that the bush foods were possibly contaminated. “It is our supermarket for food and our pharmacy for medicines, and looking after it is our religion. It doesn’t matter if you are Aboriginal or not, everyone in this part of the country has a sad story about premature sickness and death in their families. Cancer is the big one, but it is also common for people to suffer from thyroid conditions,” she tells IDN.

Fertility problems, still births, birth defects became more common at the time of the testing, but even today people like Sue wonder if their health issues are related to the ongoing radiation in the area or genetic changes passed down through generations. She wants nuclear weapons permanently banned and the uranium that can create them left in the ground.

Last year, governments, United Nations agencies and civil society members met in Oslo (Norway) for the first ever Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. This was followed with the Mexican Government hosting 146 countries in February 2014 to build on the evidence. In October 2014, 155 out of 193 member state governments supported the Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons presented to the UN General Assembly. The Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna (Austria) on December 8-9, heard Sue’s shattering testimony.

The momentum to begin negotiations on a binding international treaty to outlaw and eliminate nuclear weapons has grown manifold, according to observers. There has been a renewed global effort especially to raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and to ensure that they are never used again.

Today, estimated 17,000 warheads remain in existence, despite a significant decrease in the stockpiles of the United States and the Russian nuclear warheads since the end of the Cold War.

Australia Director of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), Tim Wright said, “It’s time for Australia to join the overwhelming majority of nations that have pledged their support for a treaty banning nuclear weapons.”

ICAN Australia has created a Youtube video [‘Don’t Want Your Nuclear Umbrella’](#) to drive home the message for all "umbrella states" to stop tolerating the bomb and reject nuclear weapons in their defence policy. The video has attracted almost 16,000 hits. “We wanted to open a discussion about extended nuclear deterrence in a comical and accessible way, especially for young people who haven’t experienced the Cold War,” Gem Romuld, Outreach Coordinator at ICAN Australia, told IDN.

80 percent Australians favour ban nukes treaty

A recent Red Cross survey has found that 8 out of 10 Australians support a legally binding treaty to ban the use of nuclear weapons. As many as 88 per cent said there would be no winners in a nuclear war given the devastating humanitarian consequences that would result.

The International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement has consistently voiced its deep humanitarian concerns about nuclear weapons, since they were first used in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons are not limited to space and time. Radiation affects health, agriculture and natural resources over a wide area and for generations to come.

Rosemary Lester, who was born in Adelaide (South Australia) in 1970, recalls how one day her father, who was in bed sick, was listening to Sir Ernest Titterton (nuclear physicist) being interviewed about Maralinga on the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) Radio. “I remember hearing dad swear out aloud. I went into the room and asked him what was wrong. He said it was something that had happened a long time ago before I was born. In fact, when he was a boy. It was when I first heard of Maralinga atomic testing”, Rosemary, Director on the Alinytjara Wilurara (North West) Natural Resource Management Board, told IDN. ➔

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She has had firsthand experience of her father, both her grandparents and other family members suffering from ailments as a consequence of the nuclear tests. She herself was diagnosed with a rare auto-immune disease called Scleroderma in 2005.

“There was no awareness then about Uranium mining and its damage to the environment and what it was being used for. I now understand why my dad and my grandparents became strong advocates and felt the need to actively protest, speak, educate and advocate against the Nuclear Industry and protect “nganampa nguru” (our country)”, said Rosemary, who wants oral histories of the time recorded and provided in both English and Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara languages for future generations.

In 1984, the Australian Government established the Maralinga Royal Commission to probe the nuclear tests in response to growing community concern regarding measures being taken to protect people from the exposure to radiation, and the disposal of radioactive substances and toxic materials.

“The secret files did not become available until 2003, 50 years after the Atomic tests. It is well known that Plutonium 239 remains openly exposed in that region. The poison is in the soil, dust blows in all directions and people are breathing it in. Even that bush tucker you eat is contaminated”, says Rosemary, who is appalled that some people are saying that despite the contamination, the area is safe and want to promote it for tourism.

The responsibility for cleaning up the former test site rests with the Federal Government. Nuclear engineer and former Government supervisor of the Maralinga clean-up, Allan Parkinson, told the ABC that contamination remains widespread.

“There's over 100 square kilometers that is still contaminated above the clean-up criteria . . . Its plutonium 239 and in 24,000 years' time half of it will still be there,” Parkinson told the ABC in June 2014.

Take responsibility

Rosemary wants authorities to take responsibility for the severe impact of the legacy of the nuclear testing. “Many people died immediately, but others are living with chronic health issues, cancers and disabilities. Not to mention depression, the painful loss and trauma suffered mentally, the psychological and social damage, and watching loved ones' lives diminish. It has eroded our culture and further marginalised our people”, she said.

Advocates for nuclear abolition want governments to acknowledge their role in this disaster and stop mining uranium. A recent ANFA meeting heard that around 40,000 rounds of depleted uranium weapons have been deployed in Australian military training exercises. It recognised the intergenerational health impacts from nuclear weapons testing as well as the documented use and impacts of depleted uranium weapons.

“The Government must provide funding for research on the Environmental damage to the Atomic Zone and Fallout area; apologise to First Nations People (Aboriginals); compensate individuals that are affected; and review the Piling Trust to help those that are sick”, Rosemary told IDN.

The Maralinga Piling Trust was set up to manage compensation monies granted by the Australian Government to the Maralinga and Spinifex Country Traditional Owners as a result of the loss of access to lands due to the nuclear tests.

Observers are of the view that the Vienna Conference has given a fresh impetus to the survivors' fight for justice as they aspire for a future free of nuclear weapons. [IDN-InDepthNews – December 9, 2014]

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Searching for Evidence of a Nuclear Test

By CTBTO

VIENNA (IPS) - The most sophisticated on-site inspection exercise conducted to date by the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) formally concluded this month.



The [Integrated Field Exercise IFE14](#) in Jordan from Nov. 3 to Dec. 9 involved four years of preparation, 150 tonnes of specialised equipment and over 200 international experts.

According to CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo, “Through this exercise, we have shown the world that it is absolutely hopeless to try to hide a nuclear explosion from us. We have now mastered all components of the [verification regime](#), and brought our on-site inspection capabilities to the same high level as the other two components, the 90 percent complete [network of monitoring stations](#) and the [International Data Centre](#).”

During the five-week long simulation exercise, the inspection team searched an area of nearly 1,000 square kilometres using 15 of the 17 [techniques](#) permissible under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty ([CTBT](#)). Some of these state-of-the-art techniques were used for the first time in an on-site inspection context, including equipment to detect traces of relevant radioactive [noble gases](#) on and beneath the ground as well as from the air. Other techniques scanned the ground in frequencies invisible to the human eye.

Key pieces of equipment were [provided by CTBTO member states](#) as voluntary and in-kind contributions.

Throughout the inspection, the team narrowed down the regions of interest to one limited area where relevant features including traces of relevant [radionuclides](#) were successfully found.

Inspection team leader Gregor Malich said, “We started off with the 1,000 square kilometres specified in the inspection request, using all available information provided. We also used satellite imagery and archive information for planning the initial inspection activities.

“Once in the field, the team conducted overflights, put out a [seismic](#) network and undertook wide area ground-based visual observation as well as [radiation](#) measurements. This helped us narrow down the areas of interest to more than 20 polygons which we then inspected in more detail. ➡

Photo: CTBTO Head Lassina Zerbo overseeing the equipment in use during IFE14. Photo Courtesy of CTBTO

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“In the end, we detected radionuclides relevant for the on-site inspection and indicative of a nuclear explosion. At this location, the team also applied geophysical methods to find signatures (tell-tale signs) consistent with a recent underground [nuclear explosion](#).”

The exercise also tested the CTBTO’s elaborate logistics system, which features specially developed airfreight-compatible containers that allow for field equipment, sensors or generators to be used straight from the containers. Thanks to a strict safety and security regime, not a single health or security incident occurred throughout the exercise.

IFE14 Exercise Manager Gordon MacLeod explained the need to test the on-site inspection regime in a comprehensive way: “Think of a car: all of the parts can be designed and built separately (engine, wheels, brakes, gearbox etc.) but if they are not put together and tested in an integrated manner, there is no guarantee that the car will function correctly and safely.

“For an On-Site Inspection, an additional layer of complexity derives from the human interaction and interpretations of the Treaty, Protocol, and Operations Manual as well as the perceptions, interpretations and actions of the individual inspectors.”

Praise for the host country

CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo thanked host country Jordan for its outstanding hospitality and support.

He said: “Jordan was chosen by CTBTO member states for its generosity in supporting the exercise and because of the special geological features of the Dead Sea region. By hosting IFE14, Jordan is reconfirming its role as an anchor of peace and stability in the region.

“I am inspired by the fact that His Majesty King Abdullah II of Jordan has generously placed the exercise under his royal patronage and grateful for the outstanding cooperation and hospitality from all branches of the Jordanian government.”

Jordan’s Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour described the proliferation of nuclear weapons as “a threat of nightmarish proportions for regional and global security” and stressed Jordan’s active support for the CTBT and its organisation by hosting IFE14.

“It fills me with pride that the other 182 CTBTO member states chose Jordan to host IFE14 in a competitive process. The Dead Sea provided the perfect topography and geology for a realistic and challenging on-site inspection simulation.”

Over the coming year, the CTBTO and its member states will analyse the lessons learnt from IFE14 and identify possible gaps.

In a preliminary assessment, the head of the evaluation team, John Walker said: “It is very clear that on its own terms, the exercise has been successful, and has also clearly shown improvements on IFE08 [the [previous Integrated Field Exercise](#) held in Kazakhstan in 2008] as well as the three build up exercises that we’ve run over the two preceding years before we ran this one.”

MacLeod added: “IFE08 was only a test drive around the block – now we’ve been on the Autobahn.” (IPS | December 22, 2014)

The CTBTO can be found on the [web](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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Hiroshima, Nagasaki Cast Shadow Over Nuclear Conference in Vienna

By THALIF DEEN



UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - When Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was [at Harvard University](#) December 2 to pick up the ‘Humanitarian of the Year’ award, his thoughts transcended the city of Cambridge, Massachusetts, to the venue of a key international conference in Vienna, Austria, on nuclear weapons.

But this time around, the focus will be on the “humanitarian impact” of the deadly use of any one of the over 16,300 nuclear weapons that still exist nearly 25 years after the end of the Cold War.

“A single detonation of a modern nuclear weapon would cause destruction and human suffering on a scale far exceeding the devastation seen in Hiroshima and Nagasaki,” warns Austria, the host country for the conference.

The 70th anniversary of those destructive U.S. bombings in Japan will be commemorated in Hiroshima next year.

In his acceptance speech, the secretary-general told the Harvard audience the humanitarian perspective on nuclear weapons is attracting growing attention – as he singled out the Vienna conference due to take place Dec. 8-9.

The last two conferences on the same theme took place in Oslo, Norway in March 2013, and in Nayarit, Mexico in February 2014. ➡

Photo: Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon received the 2014 Humanitarian of the Year award from Harvard University’s Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations, in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Credit: UN Photo/Evan Schneider

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Ban said people are also asking why the world's nuclear powers are spending vast sums to modernise arsenals instead of eliminating them, which they committed to do under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

"Where are their disarmament plans? They do not exist," he lamented.

According to the U.S. Congressional Budget Office, the United States alone plans to spend about 355 billion dollars over the next 10 years just to modernise its nuclear arsenal.

And the total estimated cost for modernisation of weapons over the next 30 years is a staggering one trillion dollars.

Asked about the possible outcome of the Vienna conference, Dr. M.V. Ramana, associate research scholar, Programme on Science and Global Security at Princeton University, told IPS, "My hope is that people will come out of the Vienna conference with a continued resolve to eliminate these weapons, not in the distant future as the nuclear weapons states keep promising, but in the near future."

Referring to the secretary-general's speech, he said: "It is refreshing to hear a high official speak with such candour. I would like to especially underline what he said: 'Ultimately, there are no right hands for wrong weapons and add that all nuclear weapons are wrong weapons.'"

His statement that the nuclear weapon states do not have disarmament plans is also sadly spot on, said Dr. Ramana, author of 'Bombing Bombay? Effects of Nuclear Weapons and a Case Study of a Hypothetical Explosion'.

Ray Acheson, director, Reaching Critical Will, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), told IPS, "We expect that the outcome of the Vienna conference will reflect the demand from the overwhelming majority of states that we must take concerted action now in response to the evidence about the risks and impacts of a nuclear weapon detonation."

The logical conclusion of the evidence-based gatherings in Oslo and Nayarit – and now Vienna – is to launch a diplomatic process to prohibit nuclear weapons, she added. "A treaty banning nuclear weapons would advance nuclear disarmament through its normative force and practical effects," she said.

The Vienna conference may not launch such a process but it can help set the stage by presenting irrefutable evidence about the dangers of nuclear weapons, challenging the idea that nuclear weapons have any value for defence or deterrence, and providing space for governments, international organisations, and civil society to examine the legal landscape and suggest ways forward, said Acheson.

Dr. Joseph Gerson, director of the Peace and Economic Security Programme at the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), told IPS, "We may not hear much about next April's NPT Review Conference during the formal debate at the Vienna conference, but that's what it's about."

With the success of the Review Conference in doubt – given the P-5's resistance to fulfilling their Article VI obligation to begin good faith negotiations to eliminate their nuclear arsenals, and the failure of the United States to convene the promised 2012 Middle East Nuclear Weapons and WMD-Free Zone (Weapons of Mass Destruction) conference – the Austrian government's goal is to build positive momentum going into the Review Conference, he added.

The P5 comprises the United States, UK, France, China and Russia, the world's five major nuclear powers, who are also the five permanent members of the U.N. Security Council.

Dr. Gerson said recognising that nuclear weapons abolition cannot be negotiated without the active participation of the nuclear powers, Austrian Ambassador Alexander Kmentt, director for Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, placed a high premium on winning their participation, especially the U.S. and Britain, who now have bragging rights over Russia, China and France. ☺

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“The price paid was Austria’s commitment to limit the conference to educational discourse,” he said.

Dr. Gerson said those who demand action steps will be violating their invitations and will have little impact on the chair’s summary, which will lack the bite of Juan Manuel Gomez-Robledo’s summary at Nayarit conference.

“And it will be interesting to see if and how – after their boycotts of the Oslo and Nayarit Conferences – the presence of the Anglo-American nuclear powers leads some to bite their tongues,” he added.

Dr. Gerson also predicted the Vienna conference may reinforce commitments of some to work for abolition, but the men and women of power and most of humanity have known the essentials since the A-bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

“Most will speak diplomatically, but the hypocrisy of bemoaning the human consequences of nuclear weapons while Washington spends one trillion dollars to modernise its nuclear arsenal and to replace its delivery systems, Britain moves toward Trident replacement, and Russia relies increasingly on its nuclear arsenal in face of NATO’s expansion, will hang heavy over the conference,” he declared.

The government of Austria says nine states (the P5 plus India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea) are believed to possess nuclear weapons, “but as nuclear technology is becoming more available, more states, and even non-state actors, may strive to develop nuclear weapons in the future.”

Dr. Ramana told IPS delegates to next week’s meeting will certainly be aware that next year will be the seventieth anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – the bombings “that first made us realise the utterly horrendous nature of the humanitarian consequences of the use of even one or two nuclear weapons”.

“What we do need to remember is that 2015 will also be the seventieth anniversary of the anti-nuclear peace movement,” he reminded.

“Just as nuclear weapons haven’t gone away, the movement challenging these weapons of mass destruction hasn’t gone away,” he added.

Dr. Gerson said governments will position themselves, rehearsing their arguments in the run up to the NPT Review. Meanwhile, out of earshot, serious side discussions will take place to frame and influence next April’s diplomacy.

“Civil society will speak truth to power. We’ll also be drawing on our contacts to build popular force behind our demands that April’s NPT Review mandate the commencement of Article VI’s good faith negotiations to eliminate the world’s omnicidal nuclear arsenals.”

One certain outcome, he said: the Human Consequences process will have been kept alive, to be revisited following April’s NPT Review Conference.

Acheson told IPS that Ban’s remarks at Harvard highlight “why we can no longer afford to wait for leadership from the nuclear-armed states”.

She said their plans to modernise their nuclear arsenals, extending the lives of these weapons of mass destruction into the indefinite future, demonstrate they are not willing to comply with their legal obligation to disarm. “We can’t afford to keep waiting for leadership from nuclear-armed states.”

Acheson said a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons can and should be negotiated by those states ready to do so, even if the states with nuclear weapons are not ready to participate.

“The 70th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki attacks has already been cited as the appropriate milestone to achieve our goal of launching a new diplomatic process,” Acheson declared. (IPS | December 5, 2014)

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Civil Society Perspective

Trident, Labour and Scotland

By Kate Hudson, General Secretary, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

No matter how much Westminster politicians may wish to put Trident on the back burner for the general election, the reality is that's not going to happen. Our friends north of the border – [where up to 75 per cent oppose Trident](#) irrespective of their position on independence – will make sure of that. The leader with the biggest headache over this is currently Ed Miliband: the question of Labour policy on Britain's possession of nuclear weapons – currently located in Scotland – can make or break a Labour victory and a future Labour government.

Currently the very future of Labour – as a major player in Scotland's politics – is at stake. Since the referendum, the parties that backed the No vote have taken a nose dive, as thousands have flocked to the parties of the Yes camp, from SNP through Greens, and SSP. Scottish civil society has taken on a whole new look, with widespread popular engagement at an all-time high. Labour is particularly badly hit and [opinion polls suggest](#) that it could lose as many as 31 Westminster seats in May's general election. Reports from within the party suggest high levels of anger and dissatisfaction – about what the party now stands for and who decides where it is going. Johann Lamont's resignation as leader seemed to sum up much of the problem as she [accused Westminster Labour colleagues](#) of trying to run Scotland "like a branch office of London".

It may be that there is no way back in the current context – especially when Gordon Brown's last ditch promises of vote-winning 'devo-max' aren't being honoured and Nicola Sturgeon offers a more left-wing variant of SNP politics that is potentially attractive to Labour voters. So any hope of a Labour recovery, however marginal, surely hinges now on the outcome of the current Scottish Labour leadership contest where once again Trident is a big factor. A new leader can have a significant impact on where the party is situated politically.

Labour's leadership is backing the [pro-Trident](#) former shadow Defence Secretary Jim Murphy. But it's hard to see how Murphy will be able to win support back to Labour on that basis, particularly when significant working class communities in Glasgow and Dundee were lost so recently to the Yes camp.

Of course Jim Murphy isn't the only option presented to Scottish Labour. Neil Findlay, the most [strongly anti-Trident](#) of the other candidates, also presents a policy platform which could help win back voters across a range of current economic and social concerns; areas where traditionally Labour has won strong support but Westminster Labour policies are no longer where Scottish voters are at. These include raising the minimum wage, the reintroduction of council house building and the reduction of private sector involvement in the NHS. If he wins the Scottish leadership on 13 December, Findlay's active anti-nuclear stance will no doubt win Labour votes – and will force Ed Miliband to look again at Trident replacement.

That imperative may well come from other Scottish sources too. In the event that the SNP takes a significantly increased number of Westminster seats –[some estimates](#) are as high as 47 – it's possible that it may hold the balance of power in a hung parliament, in the same way that the Liberal Democrats did in 2010. Nicola Sturgeon has already said that she won't make a Conservative government possible but she's [already named her price](#) for SNP support for a minority Labour government: Trident has to be removed from Scotland.

So one way or another, Ed Miliband is having to confront the Trident issue. And whether he likes it or not, it has to be tackled, as these developments show. Kicking it into the long grass of internal party policy debates is just not adequate. The Scots may have forced the issue up the political agenda, but Trident – and whether to replace it – is a crucial issue for us all. ☑

This post was first published by [New Statesman](#).

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Civil Society Perspective

Nuclear States at the Vienna Conference

By Kate Hudson, General Secretary, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament

Almost 160 states have gathered in Vienna for an [international conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons](#) – the third on this subject within two years. Speaker after speaker has underlined the extraordinary danger of keeping so many nuclear weapons – the current tally is [around 16,000](#) – when the detonation of just one, by accident or design, would be catastrophic. Recent scientific research demonstrates how much worse the impact of nuclear use would be than even that previously anticipated on every level: economic, medical, environmental, climatic, existential. All this has been drawn on by the participants, together with the expectation that the changing security context means an increased likelihood of acquisition and use by non-state actors.

In some respects, none of this is very surprising. For decades the majority of states have backed nuclear disarmament while a small number have held out in support of their own arsenals. This has been the essential dynamic at the five-yearly Review Conferences of the nuclear [Non-Proliferation Treaty](#) and their attendant (almost annual) preparatory committees. Diplomatic corps have perfected the art of the talking shop, on nuclear weapons as much as anything else. So one can understand the frustration within the NPT process, which is why, presumably, so many states have opted in to this additional non-UN dialogue on nuclear weapons.

The real question is whether the Vienna initiative can go anywhere, or whether it will just get mired in debate as differences emerge. It was clear after the last conference in the series that [some states believe a global ban treaty should be put on the table now](#) and opened for signature, irrespective of the positions of the nuclear weapons states; others believe that a step-by-step process is necessary. That question remains. But the problems posed by having a third conference without a unifying road map may have been avoided by a new factor in the dynamic.

What's different this time is that the US and UK have both attended the conference in Vienna. Both had previously, alongside the other P5 states (Russia, France and China), boycotted the conferences. Both now hope, it seems, to engage in constructive dialogue, whilst not being willing to take part in any discussion about disarmament. Much as I would like to think that the two

governments have bent to popular pressure to attend and are genuinely open-minded about the process – and there [certainly has been widespread public pressure](#) – maybe there are other factors at play too.

Some are concerned that [the US and UK are participating](#) to put the brakes on any process towards a global ban treaty. No doubt other participants will be alert to that. But what is particularly interesting is what this means for relations with the rest of the P5 group, now that their unanimity on this question has been shattered. There is bound to be speculation that it reflects the tense relationship between the US and Russia over events in Ukraine and talk of a new cold war. The P5 states are due to hold one of their [regular nuclear discussions](#) in London in February 2015 in the run up to the NPT Review Conference later in the spring. Presumably this will still go ahead, as none of them are converts to disarmament, whether or not they have been in Vienna this week. But even if the difference over attending is just a tactical question, it may make their previous bloc unanimity a hard act to recover.

It's not clear yet how any of this will impact on the NPT Review Conference, where this issue may well be little more than a sideshow. The [ongoing negotiations over Iran's nuclear programme](#) may figure, but the central issue may well be the continuing demand for progress towards a [WMD-free zone in the Middle East](#). This issue has the capacity to derail the Conference altogether, following Egypt's walk-out over lack of progress in 2013. Israel is the real hold-out here – a state which was also absent from discussions in Vienna.

There are many opportunities for the US and UK to make a difference globally on nuclear disarmament. Participating in the Vienna conference, if genuinely motivated, is a start. Getting Israel to the table over the WMD-free zone would be a huge step forward, and presumably not outside the bounds of what its major ally is capable of achieving. The real prize, of course, would be a recognition that British and US nuclear rearmament – which is certainly in government sights here in the form of Trident replacement – is not in anyone's interests and will merely serve to expedite that outcome that we most wish to avoid: nuclear catastrophe.

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<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/>



People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition
Initiated by Soka Gakkai International (SGI)



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

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