

BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

2015 IS CRUCIAL FOR A NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE WORLD

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION | WITH FEBRUARY 2016 ARTICLES



TOWARD A NUCLEAR FREE WORLD



CONTENTS

Kazakhstan Determined to Achieve a Nuclear-Weapons Free World

Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov has urged the civil society, social movements and the public at large to support governments in achieving a nuclear-weapons-free world by 2045, when the United Nations will turn 100, and to help in the establishment of a Global Anti-Nuclear Movement,

These goals were part of key international initiatives President Nursultan Nazarbayev tabled during the General Assembly session in September 2015. He also called for creating a single global anti-terrorist network, allocating 1 percent of countries' defence budgets to sustainable development, organizing a high-level international conference on reaffirming the principles of international law and coordinating international efforts under the UN on promoting green technologies. ➡ 02-03

'Ratify Treaty to Ban Nuclear Testing Before Fatigue Creeps in'

Interview with CTBTO Chief Dr Lassina Zerbo

Twenty years after it was opened for signature, the CTBT has come to stay as a de facto global treaty banning all nuclear testing – "if we take North Korea outside of the scope" – but Dr Zerbo Lassina wants to see it de jure because he is concerned that the longer it takes for its entry into force, the greater is the risk of a "fatigue" creeping in that could lead to people saying: "Why are we investing in something if we don't know when the treaty will come into force?"

Dr Zerbo Lassina is Executive Secretary of an organization called the CTBTO, which is meant to facilitate entry into force of the treaty prohibiting all nuclear tests. In an exclusive interview to IDN-InDepthNews, flagship of the International Press Syndicate (INPS), he pleads for urgent action by all the eight remaining countries whose ratification is necessary for CTBT's entry to force. ➡ 04-07

Rescuing Multilateral Disarmament

The International Peace Institute, since its inception as the International Peace Academy in 1970, has focused on strengthening the multilateral process in the conduct of international affairs with the United Nations as its focal point. It is appropriate that in the 70th anniversary year of our indispensable global institution, the UN, an Independent Commission on Multilateralism should be established by the IPI to address 16 topics of relevance to the global agenda. It is a necessary corollary to the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals that the international community has agreed to pursue. I welcome especially the Commission's choice of "Weapons of Mass Destruction, Nonproliferation and Disarmament" as one of them. ➡ 08-11

Fearing a Veto Threat, Security Council Delays Action on North Korea

When the 15-member UN Security Council (UNSC) met at an emergency session on February 7, a non-working Sunday afternoon, to discuss the most recent defiance by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), the outcome was predictable.

After "urgent consultations", the UNSC "strongly condemned" DPRK for launching a rocket which could lead to the future development of intercontinental ballistic missile technologies. But the Council stopped short of penalizing a country that continues to defy the world body despite several previous resolutions – and a rash of U.S. economic sanctions. ➡ 12-13

Japan and Kazakhstan Campaign for Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

As the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) prepares to convene a ministerial meeting in June, Kazakhstan and Japan have reaffirmed their commitment to intensify their efforts toward entry into force of the Treaty. During the first week of the symposium 'Science and Diplomacy for Peace and Security' from January 25 to February 4, representatives of the two countries in Vienna assured that they would set forth their efforts initiated by their respective foreign ministers in September 2015 at the United Nations headquarters in New York. ➡ 14-16

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Kazakhstan Determined to Achieve a Nuclear-Weapons Free World

By Ramesh Jaura



President Nazarbayev addressing the UN General Assembly in September 2015.

BERLIN | ASTANA (IDN) - Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov has urged the civil society, social movements and the public at large to support governments in achieving a nuclear-weapons-free world by 2045, when the United Nations will turn 100, and to help in the establishment of a Global Anti-Nuclear Movement,

These goals were part of key international initiatives President Nursultan Nazarbayev tabled during the General Assembly session in September 2015. He also called for creating a single global anti-terrorist network, allocating 1 percent of countries' defence budgets to sustainable development, organizing a high-level international conference on reaffirming the principles of international law and coordinating international efforts under the UN on promoting green technologies.

"President Nazarbayev's speech at the UN demonstrated a new level of participation for Kazakhstan in global policies, and the initiatives have become important landmarks for the international community," said Foreign Minister Idrissov in an interview with the Astana Times.

The Kazakh newspaper Astana Times carried the interview on February 20, within weeks after the adoption of the Universal Declaration for the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free World by the UN General Assembly in December 2015.

"The Nevada-Semipalatinsk international anti-nuclear movement and The ATOM (Abolish Testing. Our Mission) Project are evidence of the power and real potential of civil initiatives," Idrissov said.

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The Kazakh Foreign Minister recalled that when in August 1991, President Nazarbayev decided to close the Semipalatinsk Test Site, he relied on the will of the people. And this support of the people helped overcome the enormous pressure of the Soviet military lobby.

“Raising awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons; disarmament education; and the active efforts of public associations, nongovernmental organisations and scientific and educational institutions can break the passivity of the majority of the population and persuade governments to take more decisive steps towards nuclear disarmament,” Idrissov added.

Of special importance to the citizens of Kazakhstan, he noted, is the fact that from the UN platform, Nazarbayev promoted making a world without nuclear weapons humanity’s ultimate goal in the 21st century. Adopting the Universal Declaration for the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free World is a new, important step in realising this goal.

The Kazakh diplomats promoted the draft declaration for five years. “As the result of this work, at the end of last year, we reached a stage when the draft was put to a vote by the UN General Assembly. An overwhelming majority of UN member states approved the declaration: 133 countries voted for the adoption of the document, while 23 countries voted against and 28 abstained.”

The Kazakh Foreign Minister admitted that despite the Universal Declaration having been developed as a consensus document based on universally accepted principles and earlier agreements, not all countries are at this stage ready to support it. This is demonstrated by the approaches of a number of nuclear-weapons countries and their allies that depend on their nuclear umbrella. They are not ready to renounce nuclear weapons.

In the coming years, he expects “a long process of universalising the declaration”. To this end, Kazakh diplomats had suggested that the resolution be reconfirmed on a regular basis, once every three years. A reporting mechanism of the member states to the UN and of the UN Secretariat to the General Assembly on the implementation of the goals and objectives set in the declaration is envisaged, he added.

“Reconfirming the goals and principles of the declaration will also help keep the attention of the international community on the declaration and keep the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world on the UN agenda . . . despite the complexity of achieving the goal of making the declaration universal, it is not unachievable,” Idrissov said in the interview.

In an attempt to drive home the point, the Kazakh Foreign Minister emphasized that nuclear weapons have enormous destructive power. Their direct effects de facto cannot be controlled; they do not discriminate. They kill and bring unbelievable suffering to even those at a great distance from the epicentre.

“Moreover, as the tragic stories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as hundreds of Soviet nuclear tests on the Kazakh land, have shown, nuclear weapons have long-lasting implications for people’s health reaching into future generations, for the environment and for the economy of the affected territories. Broadly speaking, nuclear weapons threaten the survival of humanity and the existence of civilization,” he declared.

Nevertheless, nuclear countries are not willing to renounce possession of them and the possibility of using them in certain circumstances, arguing that nuclear weapons are not prohibited by international law.

However, Idrissov said, the absolute majority of the world is confident that nuclear weapons must be destroyed and banned as inhumane, indiscriminate in nature, inflicting excessive suffering and violating international humanitarian law and laws of humanity.

In this context, he referred to October 21, 2014 Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons that was joined by 155 countries. In 2012-2014, several similar statements were adopted and three international conferences on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons were held in Norway, Mexico and Austria.

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At the end of 2015, Austria prepared the so-called Humanitarian Pledge to fill the legal gap for the prohibition of the latest type of weapons of mass destruction – nuclear weapons. A UN resolution was adopted in support of the statement. The recognition of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons can form the basis of a process aimed at the total prohibition of nuclear weapons and their complete disarmament.

A significant contribution to the dissemination of information on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons comes from The ATOM Project. The initiative, launched by President Nazarbayev in August 2012, aims to inform to the public around the world about the tragedy of Kazakh people living near the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, as well as other people of the world who have been victims of nuclear testing.

Anyone who wants to get acquainted with the content of The ATOM Project can visit its website and personally support it by signing the online petition to the heads of states and governments of the world to ensure the speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Meanwhile, nearly 220,000 people from more than 100 countries have signed the petition and supported it. “In this context,” the Kazakh Foreign Minister said, “we intend to continue the work on the implementation of another important initiative of President Nazarbayev concerning the formation of a Global Anti-Nuclear Movement. It also requires a hard work, which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs intends to do.”

The only guarantee of security is total and universal nuclear disarmament, declared Idrissov. The idea of the deterrent role of nuclear weapons is a dangerous misconception that encourages more countries to possess them.

In fact the final document adopted by consensus at the UN General Assembly Special Session devoted to Disarmament back in 1978 says: “The most effective guarantee against the danger of nuclear war and the use of nuclear weapons is nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.” [IDN-InDepthNews – 21 February 2016]

‘Ratify Treaty to Ban Nuclear Testing Before Fatigue Creeps in’

Interview with CTBTO Chief Dr Lassina Zerbo

BERLIN | VIENNA (IDN) - Twenty years after it was opened for signature, the CTBT has come to stay as a *de facto* global treaty banning all nuclear testing – “if we take North Korea outside of the scope” – but Dr Zerbo Lassina wants to see it *de jure* because he is concerned that the longer it takes for its entry into force, the greater is the risk of a “fatigue” creeping in that could lead to people saying: “Why are we investing in something if we don’t know when the treaty will come into force?”

Dr Zerbo Lassina is Executive Secretary of an organization called the CTBTO, which is meant to facilitate entry into force of the treaty prohibiting all nuclear tests. In an exclusive interview to IDN-InDepthNews, flagship of the International Press Syndicate (INPS), he pleads for urgent action by all the eight remaining countries whose ratification is necessary for CTBT’s entry to force.

The interview was conducted by Ramesh Jaura, Director-General and Editor-in-Chief of INPS and IDN during the symposium 'Science and Diplomacy for Peace and Security: the CTBT@20' from January 25 to February 4, 2016 at the Vienna International Centre in Austria.

The transcription of the interview available as [video](#) follows:

Question: Why is the CTBT important? How is it to be distinguished from NPT, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty?

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CTBTO Chief Lassina Zerbo | Credit: CTBTO

Dr Zerbo: The CTBT is a part of the NPT, one can say this because in the many articles under the NPT, the CTBT comes higher up, and if we take the last review conference: 2015 review conference, NPT review conference in New York, if there's one issue that was the consensual issue that was the CTBT, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty – for several reasons. I see the test ban treaty in the context of non-proliferation and ultimately disarmament as a low-hanging fruit. Why? Because you've 183 that have signed the treaty, 164 that have ratified and in our Annex II framework, there're 8 remaining countries whose ratification is necessary for its entry to force.

Q: You would call them rogue states?

Dr Zerbo: You've India, Pakistan, Israel, Iran and Egypt, U.S., China and North Korea. Why is it important that those states get on board for the entry into force? Because the entry into force of the CTBT contributes to international peace and security for it will put an end to the key framework in the development of the nuclear weapon testing. Testing is important, if you want to make sure that the weapon you developed is working. If we put an end to nuclear testing by the entry into force (of the CTBT), we don't talk about North Korea anymore, and we don't talk about any other country. And that's why *the entry into force of the CTBT shouldn't be isolated from all the debates about whether North Korea has tested H-bomb or A-bomb*. The question is not about A, H or Z. The question is about testing and no more testing. And that's why the CTBT is important.

Q: But why is it that this treaty, as far as its coming into force is concerned, facing such an uphill task? It's twenty years now that it was opened for signatures – in 1996.

Dr Zerbo: First of all, I don't think anyone had anticipated that entry into force of the treaty of the CTBT would take that long. They're basically banking on the experience of the OPCW, the chemical weapon convention, whereby it took two-three years for its entry into force. I think many underestimated the geopolitical situation as things were moving and *the fact that it was rejected by the U.S. Senate didn't help because it brought doubts in many heads with regard to relevance of ratifying the CTBT. If in 1999, the U.S. had ratified the CTBT, it would have been a completely different ballgame today*. We know, nevertheless, that the U.S. remains committed to ratifying the CTBT but the administration had its hands tied because they didn't have the number at the senate.

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Q: What makes you optimistic that the numbers would change?

Dr Zerbo: What makes me optimistic is because I don't see the CTBT as a partisan issue. It's not Republican against Democrat when you vote for or against the CTBT. It should be a bi-partisan issue whereby both Republican and Democrat see the validity, the importance, the necessity of the CTBT in the US national security framework. That's what we should work on. Not to say we need more Democrats to get the CTBT ratified or we need more Republicans to not get it ratified. I don't see it this way. I see it as an effort to get both parties to come together to consider this issue as important for U.S. national security and to do so, I think the administration is on the right track even if . . . people like us who are heading this organisation feel that it's a bit slow. I think it's on right track because you've to educate people for them to understand before you get into a debate where you can speak the same language, you can be in the same level-playing field where you can talk, debate and then come up with a solution that could lead to the ratification.

Q: On the basis of what you're saying, it's obvious that yours is an unflinching commitment to this CTBT and its coming into force. It's only in 2013 that you became the Executive Secretary and it's widely known that you've undertaken a number of efforts, for example, by setting up a group of eminent persons. Could you briefly explain what are the other activities that you've undertaken to create this awareness?

Dr Zerbo: What activities have been undertaken to help to move on the CTBT entry into force. Look, I took over the position as Executive Secretary in 2013. A lot had been done through my predecessors and together with me because I was the director of a key division, the International Data Centre. But, if a lot has been done, we probably haven't done enough because business is not finished. The CTBT is not in force yet. So now let me to go to what we have done. What we've done? We've given to the international community the technical and political tools for them to trust what they designed conceptually more than twenty years ago, when nobody believed that there would be a possibility to establish an international monitoring system and a verification regime that would verify compliance of the treaty to that extent.

When I say to that extent, it's the efficiency, the reliability and the commitment that came with the contribution of talented staff in the secretariat to have detected afore an unusual event in the Korean peninsula and put all the information, the technical specifications under disposal of state signatories in the time frame of entry into force.

This was the key. We've proven to everyone that they've invested in something that pays off right now because they can tangibly see where the money has gone. It's gone into building this deterrent in a way where nobody can cheat with regard to nuclear testing, explosive testing without being detected by our international monitoring system together with the national technical means of the state parties.

Q: Where do we go from here?

Dr Zerbo: Where do we go from here? We should bank on what was achieved technically and politically to put in place the monitoring framework and the verification process for the compliance of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. That is a given (situation), if that's what serves the purpose to convince state parties to ratify and then to move for the entry into force, what we need is leadership. Leadership in acknowledging what hasn't worked – meaning the frustrations, the concerns of those eight remaining countries, to work on those concerns and work on those frustrations. It's the only way by sitting around the table that we can address the issues. We cannot keep on saying India and Pakistan have not signed the treaty. North Korea has not signed the treaty. Why bother at this point in time? We can't let the time pass where and when North Korea is continuing testing because we don't know who will be the next.

Q: There's a view one has heard here at the symposium in Vienna that it should not be left only to the United States to ratify the treaty. It can be done independently. For example, India and Pakistan could do that. Israel could do that. Iran could do it. Do you think this is something which is realistic, this approach?

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Dr Zerbo: I think it is realistic for a simple reason where, you know, it's the right timing in everything and right now if you look at the eight countries, which one of them has a situation that we can consider right or conducive for CTBT ratification. If I speak today, I would say Israel and Iran. And you ask me 'why'. Why? Under the JCPOA, the Joint Consultative Plan Of Action, under the Iran deal, in Iran they are showing that through implementing this deal that they have no intention whatsoever to develop nuclear weapons. If Iran under the implementation of the JCPOA is showing that, the ratification of the CTBT becomes more than relevant to Iran. If that's the context, Israel has nothing to lose. The threat that they had with regard to Iran developing nuclear weapon is gone. If that threat is gone, let them join forces and consider the CTBT ratification together.

And this will create a dynamics in the region with regard to what was a dream for so long: the WMD-free zone in the Middle East. Because you have two super powers in the Middle East who would consider the CTBT ratification for Egypt to join – maybe. To consider because, I mean the situation will be conducive in term of trust and confidence and move on. *And this is why I propose a strong moratorium on testing in the Middle East, a strong moratorium on testing among the P-5.* They've done it.

But it hasn't been sealed or said anywhere in writing. It's a gentleman's agreement. You just heard India said they would not stop the entry into force of the CTBT. They would not test. We hear it from China. We hear it from U.S. But shouldn't we have a framework where this is said, written and sealed, a condition that could lead into their ratification of CTBT. This is what we need. To do that, you need a platform where those can discuss together.

Q: So that would mean that one should consider the CTBT as a de facto though not a de jure treaty.

Dr Zerbo: The 'de facto' term that led to a de facto norm has been used and is being used. I did use it myself but I want to stop using it. Because we don't need de facto we need the reality. We need de jure. So if you get satisfied with de facto, you never move forward. And this is the risk although having a de facto norm is still good because it is a quick way, and this is what we have right now – if we take North Korea outside of the scope. But more importantly my issue is the risk that the longer the entry into force of the CTBT is, the more risk we have with regard to treaty fatigue that could lead to people saying, 'Why are we investing in something if we don't know when the treaty will come into force?' That's the biggest risk for this treaty.

Q: Very true. Two brief questions. When are you going to North Korea?

Dr Zerbo: When I am invited. If you give me an invitation, I will get on the next plane to North Korea.

Q: Have you talked to the Chinese about this?

Dr Zerbo: I've talked to the North Koreans about it. Because those are the people that I've met. When I talk to the Chinese, I'll talk about their ratification and their ratification and when I talk to the North Koreans, I'll talk about how they can join the CTBT.

Q: When do you think the treaty will become reality?

Dr Zerbo: I wish yesterday.

Q: But realistically.

Dr Zerbo: Realistically... In this 21st century can we talk about 'realistically'? That's the question I have to ask and I'm going to answer the same question by saying, 'What is realistic today?' Things can change tomorrow. It takes a huge crisis and the geopolitical context changes drastically and we may find ourselves in a situation where people find the urgency to sit around the table and then to decide on this treaty. That could happen. The same way it happened for the Syria issue in tern of the chemical weapons. I'm not saying we need a detonation before we do that but who knows. What happens in the world that necessitates a situation where people feel the urgency to sit together and then deal with this what I call a low-hanging fruit before the situation gets more complex. And in that sense it could happen any time because I'm optimistic. [IDN-InDepthNews – 11 February 2016]

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Rescuing Multilateral Disarmament

By Jayantha Dhanapala*

KANDY, Sri Lanka (IDN) - The International Peace Institute, since its inception as the International Peace Academy in 1970, has focused on strengthening the multilateral process in the conduct of international affairs with the United Nations as its focal point.

It is appropriate that in the 70th anniversary year of our indispensable global institution, the UN, an Independent Commission on Multilateralism should be established by the IPI to address 16 topics of relevance to the global agenda. It is a necessary corollary to the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals that the international community has agreed to pursue. I welcome especially the Commission's choice of "Weapons of Mass Destruction, Nonproliferation and Disarmament" as one of them.

Seventy years ago on January 24, 1946, the United Nations General Assembly meeting in London adopted its very first resolution and, significantly, by consensus. This historic resolution established a commission of the UN Security Council to ensure:

The "control of atomic energy to ensure its use only for peaceful purposes," and "The elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction."

It was no surprise that less than one year after the end of World War II – following the horrifying first uses of atomic weapons on Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9, 1945 – the UNGA should identify the elimination of nuclear weapons as the subject for its first resolution. No other weapon before or after has had such catastrophic humanitarian consequences, which include long-term genetic and ecological impacts.

It was the very first international call for abolition – and it remains unfulfilled. Non-proliferation and disarmament are two faces of the same coin. There can be no proliferation if weapons are eliminated.

We have banned the other two categories of weapons of mass destruction – biological weapons were outlawed by the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) of 1972 and has 173 parties to it today; and chemical weapons were delegitimized by the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which has 192 parties.

While both treaty regimes lack universal membership, the BWC lacks a rigorous verification system or an organization, apart from an International Support Unit, to implement the convention. The CWC, on the other hand, has a most intrusive verification system and is supported by a robust organization that has proven itself over the issue of chemical weapons in Syria.

The world has approximately 15,850 nuclear warheads among nine nuclear weapon armed countries with the USA and the Russian Federation accounting for 93% of the weapons. Of this about 4000 warheads are on a deployed operational footing.

The spectre of the use of a nuclear weapon through political intent, cyber attack or by accident – by a nation state or by a non-state actor – is more real than we, in our cocoons of complacency, choose to acknowledge.

At a time of declining resources for development a huge amount of US \$1776 billion continues to be spent on arms in general and nuclear weapons modernization. In the U.S. alone, in a glaring contradiction of President Obama's promises of a nuclear-weapon-free world, nuclear weapon modernization will cost \$355 billion over the next ten years.

*Jayantha Dhanapala is former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Chair of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, former Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the UN in Geneva (1984-1987) and to the USA (1995-98), and former Director of UNIDIR (1987-92). This essay is based on a recent keynote address given in Geneva.

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A far-sighted military general twice-elected President of the USA, Dwight Eisenhower, warned over 50 years ago about the insidious influence of the “military industrial complex”. That influence – driven by an insatiable desire for profit – has spread globally, stoking the flames of war even as the United Nations and other peacemakers try to find peaceful solutions in terms of the Charter.

The world order today remains dominated by the nation-state system that we trace back to the Peace of Westphalia of 1648, which ended the Thirty Years War in Europe.

The new nations of the Global South emerging from the decolonization process – first in Latin America in the 19th century and later in the 20th century in Asia and Africa – have embraced this system with enthusiasm, drawing on their historical and cultural traditions to assert strongly held national identities.

Despite the strong trends of globalization, aided by the Information and Communications Revolution that have integrated the peoples of the world today, the forces of nationalism continue to prevail.

While some nations yield aspects of their sovereignty to form regional groupings, others willingly cede areas of governance to international organizations in a pragmatic recognition that multilateral approaches have comparative advantages over other strategies. And yet even that is being challenged by xenophobic reactions to the mass migration of people displaced by the wars that policies of “regime change” have caused.

At the apex of the rule-based multilateral system is the United Nations, which after 70 years, is engaged in a continuous process of renewal and reform aimed at strengthening multilateralism.

The debate over multilateralism is not however coterminous with the debate over the UN or the direction of its reform. It is basically about the options available to nation states in the conduct of their international relations – whether they want to go it alone unilaterally, act in groups plurilaterally, or be a part of a more universal approach multilaterally.

The discussion and negotiation of disarmament issues at the multilateral level was long dominated in the postwar years by the permanent members of the Security Council and the two Cold War alliance partners within NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

This trend persisted until the Non-aligned Movement began to assert its influence. The Colombo Summit of the Non-aligned in 1976, for example, led to the convening of the First Special Session of the GA devoted to Disarmament (SSOD I) in 1978. The Final Document of that Conference remains the indisputable high watermark of multilateral agreement on disarmament. In particular the setting of priorities was clear. I quote:

“47. Nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization. It is essential to halt and reverse the nuclear arms race in all its aspects in order to avert the danger of war involving nuclear weapons. The ultimate goal in this context is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

48. In the task of achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament, all the nuclear weapon States, in particular those among them which possess the most important nuclear arsenals, bear a special responsibility.”

Apart from agenda setting, SSOD-I also created the machinery for the deliberation and negotiation of disarmament, which is still in operation although some parts, such as the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament (CD), are arguably dysfunctional.

On January 26 this year UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in a message to the CD was unambiguously blunt in saying – “During my tenure as Secretary-General, I have done my best to help reinvigorate this body and to advance multilateral disarmament negotiations. This included my Five-Point Plan of 2008 and the high-level meeting I convened in 2010. I will continue to spare no effort, but the ultimate burden rests on the members of this Conference to bridge the gaps and find an urgent solution to the chronic impasse. Without such concrete action, this Conference risks becoming completely marginalized.”

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NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION | WITH FEBRUARY 2016 ARTICLES

The First Committee of the UNGA and the Disarmament Commission were established as the discussion or deliberative organs for multilateral disarmament including WMD. The CD in Geneva was the sole multilateral negotiating body.

In addition, the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) were created. UNIDIR, which I headed in the past, has a special responsibility to equip developing countries with the expertise to participate in disarmament negotiations.

Almost four decades later there is considerable value in reviewing the effectiveness of these bodies and there is pressure to do so. Subsequent Special Sessions – SSOD-II and SSOD-III – failed to make the same impact and several efforts on the part of the Non-aligned Movement to convene SSOD-IV have also failed.

At the last session of the UNGA, however, a new development was launched with the Open-Ended Working Group on Nuclear Disarmament, which commences this year in Geneva hopefully with full participation from nuclear weapon and non-nuclear weapon states.

Meanwhile individual treaty-based groups have their own meetings regarding Nuclear Weapon free zones, the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, and other treaties circumscribing the deployment and use of nuclear weapons to review the operation of those treaties.

The fact that the 2015 NPT Review Conference ended with no agreement on a consensus Final Document is evidence that these multilateral systems are not working well. Indeed a general paralysis seems to have set in with the multilateral process on WMD with the CD being the scene of the main obstruction.

Such periods of inactivity in the multilateral process have occurred before, especially during the Cold War. It is by no means cast in stone that the CD should only work on the FMCT or that the Shannon Mandate should be followed to the letter when there are so many other agenda items also deserving of priority attention. In similar circumstances when no agreement was visible on a CTBT, an Ad hoc Group of Scientific Experts worked tirelessly on the verification of a CTBT.

Thus, at a minimum, a Group of Scientific Experts can be appointed to the CD to undertake the important task of designing a verification system for a Nuclear Weapon Convention in anticipation of when the time is ripe for such a Convention. Work can also be conducted concurrently on all agenda items.

The challenge for the Independent Commission on Multilateralism is to identify the causes of this paralysis and propose ways and means out of the impasse.

We have a success story from the recent past to build upon. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between Iran and the "Five plus One" States resolved key issues on Iran's nuclear programme and that Plan is now being implemented. It was concluded after long and painstaking diplomatic negotiations, which prove that constructive co-operation can yield positive results.

However, it is a matter of enormous concern that the U.S. and Russia are currently not talking to each other about their own nuclear arms control and a new round of START talks. We have not experienced this ominous silence between them on this topic for many years, even if they are to be commended for keeping to the terms of the existing START Treaty despite the deterioration of their relationship.

Ironically, while this year began with the fourth nuclear test of the DPRK, we will see the 20th anniversary of the signing of the CTBT, which must enter into force sooner than later. China, the U.S., Israel, Iran and Egypt have all signed but not ratified while DPRK, India and Pakistan have not signed. It is time for some hard diplomatic work on this front both bilaterally and multilaterally. We live in a rapidly changing complex world where several developments are inextricably interwoven. Ethno-religious extremism of barbaric proportions makes the threat of WMD being used either as a 'dirty bomb' or as a more sophisticated device a grim reality and no longer a nightmare.

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Here in Geneva, Klaus Schwab of the World Economic Forum has written about the Fourth Industrial Revolution “characterized by a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital, and biological spheres.”

Schwab refers to the impact of this on international security.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution will also profoundly impact the nature of national and international security, affecting both the probability and the nature of conflict. The history of warfare and international security is the history of technological innovation, and today is no exception. Modern conflicts involving states are increasingly “hybrid” in nature, combining traditional battlefield techniques with elements previously associated with nonstate actors. The distinction between war and peace, combatant and noncombatant, and even violence and nonviolence (think cyberwarfare) is becoming uncomfortably blurry.

As this process takes place and new technologies such as autonomous or biological weapons become easier to use, individuals and small groups will increasingly join states in being capable of causing mass harm. This new vulnerability will lead to new fears. But at the same time, advances in technology will create the potential to reduce the scale or impact of violence, through the development of new modes of protection, for example, or greater precision in targeting.

Schwab’s words help to explain my own personal involvement in the “Campaign to Stop Killer Robots”, a campaign coordinated by Human Rights Watch, to pre-emptively ban Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems (LAWS).

We would like to see these banned before they are developed and are alarmed by the increasing number of states actively researching precursors to fully autonomous weapons. The risk of proliferation increases as they go unregulated. The application of these systems to weapons of mass destruction in the battlefield has frightening implications for the laws of war, especially proportionality and the important distinction between combatant and civilian, which a programmed robot with no human intervention will be able to discern.

‘Thucydides Trap’

Another issue raised by commentators on contemporary international affairs is the so-called ‘Thucydides Trap’. In an article in the ‘Atlantic’ in September 2015, Professor Graham Allison of Harvard’s Belfer Centre wrote:

The defining question about global order for this generation is whether China and the United States can escape Thucydides’s Trap. The HYPERLINK <http://classics.mit.edu/Thucydides/pelopwar.1.first.html>

Greek historian’s metaphor reminds us of the attendant dangers when a rising power rivals a ruling power – as Athens challenged Sparta in ancient Greece, or as Germany did Britain a century ago. Most such contests have ended badly, often for both nations, a team of mine at the Harvard Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs has concluded after HYPERLINK http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/25760/thucydides_trap_project.html analyzing the historical record.

In 12 of 16 cases over the past 500 years, the result was war. When the parties avoided war, it required huge, painful adjustments in attitudes and actions on the part not just of the challenger but also the challenged. While international affairs experts and diplomats debate the issue, one fundamental aspect that stands out from the 16 cases referred to, is that nuclear weapons, with the single exception of the Cold War, were never a part of the equation.

There is therefore no question of falling into the “Thucydides Trap” by design or accident when the two contending powers are armed with weapons of mass destruction. Solutions based on international law and negotiated through patient diplomacy, and not aggressive containment policies or uncompromising irredentism, are surely the lesson of history to be adopted in this nuclear age.

The rescue of multilateral disarmament could not be more challenging and timely. [IDN-InDepthNews – 11 February 2016]

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Fearing a Veto Threat, Security Council Delays Action on North Korea

By Rodney Reynolds

UNITED NATIONS (IDN) – When the 15-member UN Security Council (UNSC) met at an emergency session on February 7, a non-working Sunday afternoon, to discuss the most recent defiance by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), the outcome was predictable.

After “urgent consultations”, the UNSC “strongly condemned” DPRK for launching a rocket which could lead to the future development of intercontinental ballistic missile technologies.

But the Council stopped short of penalizing a country that continues to defy the world body despite several previous resolutions – and a rash of U.S. economic sanctions.

The UNSC met less than 48 hours after the rocket launch which the United States described as a “major provocation, threatening not only the security of the Korean peninsula, but also of the region and the United States as well”.

Since any move to impose additional sanctions on DPRK would have triggered a veto from one of its closest allies, China, the U.S. opted for condemnation rather than punitive action.

Tariq Rauf, Director of the Disarmament, Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Programme at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), told IDN that China has continued to nurture DPRK after the breakup of the USSR.

Currently, DPRK is the only other state with old school official Communist/Socialist party in charge – and a collapse of DPRK would portend badly for China, he added.

And more importantly, he pointed out, China does not want to take on the burden of a collapsed DPRK – even as DPRK’s actions continue to upset Japan, South Korea and the U.S.

The situation is more complicated, he said, because the declining influence of China over current DPRK leaders is also a greater loss of face for China.

Despite a politically mild statement, the UNSC reserved the right to take more drastic measures at a later date.

The members of the Security Council restated their intent to “develop significant measures” in a new Security Council resolution in response to the fourth nuclear test conducted by the DPRK on January 6, 2016, in grave violation of the DPRK’s international obligations.

But that threat still remains on hold.

The members of the Security Council also said they have previously expressed their determination to take “further significant measures” in the event of another DPRK launch.

“In line with this commitment and the gravity of this most recent violation, the members of the Security Council will adopt expeditiously a new Security Council resolution with such measures in response to these dangerous and serious violations.”

Rauf said adopting additional Security Council resolutions is a losing proposition – these resolutions have not made any dent on DPRK’s nuclear and ballistic missile activities and UN sanctions have disproportionately impacted the civilian population.

“A popular saying goes that doing the same thing repeatedly with the same negative results is a sure sign of madness,” he said. The Security Council would do well to heed this saying. Rauf argued the way forward is not yet more resolutions against DPRK but to start a negotiation track that addresses the security concerns of both DPRK’s neighbours and the DPRK.

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There can be no military solution, no solution based on increasing economic and political pressure.

The only viable way to addressing this situation is engagement, just like Iran's nuclear file was resolved through diplomatic means after it had created facts on the ground – nearly 20,000 centrifuges and more than 2 tonnes of enriched uranium, despite “crippling sanctions.”

Similarly DPRK also is creating facts on the ground: four nuclear tests since 2006, flight-tests of ballistic missiles and Space Launch Vehicles (SLVs).

The diplomatic track for DPRK should address the security concerns of all sides, seek verified restraints on DPRK's nuclear and missile/SLV programmes, elements of a peace treaty between South and North Korea, nuclear security assurances by the U.S. to Japan and South Korea, and military forces and expenditures of DPRK, South Korea and Japan.

He said previously flawed policies led to DPRK crossing the Rubicon by becoming the ninth country to test and deploy nuclear weapons – an entirely preventable outcome.

“There is no time to waste,” Rauf warned.

In a statement released February 6, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry said the U.S. reaffirms its “ironclad commitment to the defense of our allies”, including the Republic of Korea and Japan.

“We will continue to work with our partners and members of the UN Security Council on significant measures to hold the DPRK to account.”

Now is the time to do so in a firm and united way, said Kerry, “with measures that make clear the determination of the international community to address the pursuit of nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities by the DPRK and this most recent destabilizing and unacceptable challenge to our common peace and security”.

Rauf pointed out that UNSC Resolution 1718 was adopted by consensus on 1 October 14 2006, under Chapter VII, Article 41, of the UN Charter, which makes it mandatory for the DPRK to "not conduct any further nuclear test or launch of a ballistic missile", "suspend all activities related to its ballistic missile programme" and "abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner".

The Security Council also adopted Resolution 1874 on June 12, 2009, Resolution 2087 on January 22, 2013, and Resolution 2094 on March 7, 2013.

He said several States, including Japan, South Korea and the U.S. have condemned DPRK for not observing the Security Council's resolutions – and it is likely a new resolution will be introduced in the aftermath of the SLV launch and the January 6, 2016 nuclear test by DPRK. [IDN-InDepthNews – 8 February 2016]

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Japan and Kazakhstan Campaign for Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

By Ramesh Jaura



Photo: Panel discussion on Roles, Responsibilities and Challenges Maintaining the IMS Verification System | Credit: CTBTO

VIENNA | TOKYO (IDN) - As the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) prepares to convene a ministerial meeting in June, Kazakhstan and Japan have reaffirmed their commitment to intensify their efforts toward entry into force of the Treaty

During the first week of the symposium ‘Science and Diplomacy for Peace and Security’ from January 25 to February 4, representatives of the two countries in Vienna assured that they would set forth their efforts initiated by their respective foreign ministers in September 2015 at the United Nations headquarters in New York.

Japan’s Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida and his Kazakh counterpart Erlan Idrissov co-chaired the 9th Ministerial-level Conference on Facilitating the Entry into force of the Treaty on September 29, 2015.

Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan reiterated in a statement issued on October 27, 2015 in Astana the reasons behind their commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) becoming a law.

“As countries which experienced and are fully aware of the threat of nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan and Japan share the moral authority and responsibility to raise the awareness of the people throughout the world about the humanitarian catastrophes nuclear weapons have brought about. With this special mission in mind, Kazakhstan and Japan are determined to work together closely pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons,” a joint statement said.

While the heads of two countries committed to a world free of nuclear weapons are undertaking necessary political steps, eminent Buddhist philosopher and peace-builder Daisaku Ikeda has expressed his fervent support for entry into force of the CTBT that has been in limbo for 20 years.

In his annual peace proposal, titled ‘Universal Respect for Human Dignity: The Great Path to Peace’, Ikeda who is president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) Buddhist association, urges “the remaining eight states to ratify the CTBT as soon as possible in order to enhance its effectiveness and ensure that nuclear weapons are never again tested on our planet”.

The eight countries include China, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the U.S., which have signed the Treaty, and North Korea, India and Pakistan that have until now refused to put their signature on the CTBT.

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Altogether 183 member states of the United Nations have signed the Treaty and 164 have ratified. But it will enter into force only when 44 countries complete their ratification procedures.

“We must of course accelerate efforts toward nuclear disarmament and abolition. At the same time, we must further develop the kind of activities that have grown from the CTBT in order to build momentum toward a world that gives highest priority to humanitarian objectives,” says the Tokyo-based SGI’s president in the proposal issued on January 26.

As the humanitarian impact and the limited military effectiveness of nuclear weapons have become more apparent, so has the fact that they are essentially unusable, says the SGI president. “Having reached the limits of military competition, we can now see signs of the emergence of a new mode of international competition, one centered around mutual striving toward humanitarian objectives.”

One example of this, adds Ikeda, can be found in the various contributions made by the International Monitoring System (IMS), which was established with the adoption of the CTBT in 1996. The CTBT has yet to enter into force, but the IMS, launched by the CTBTO Preparatory Commission to detect any nuclear explosion worldwide, is already in operation, notes Ikeda.

The IMS is an important pillar of a unique and comprehensive verification regime to make sure that no nuclear explosion goes undetected. The IMS will, when complete, consist of 337 facilities worldwide to monitor the planet for signs of nuclear explosions. Around 90 percent of the facilities are already up and running.

The SGI president lauds the IMS: “Its core function was again demonstrated in the rapid detection of the seismic waves and radiation from the recent (January 6) North Korean nuclear test. In addition, the global IMS network has been used to gather data about natural disasters and the impact of climate change.”

He adds: “Examples of this include: providing information on undersea earthquakes to tsunami early-warning centers; real-time surveillance of volcanic eruptions to enable civil aviation authorities to issue timely warnings; and tracking large-scale weather events and the collapse of ice shelves. The system has been compared to a giant Earth stethoscope.”

Ikeda agrees with the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that even before entering into force, the CTBT is saving lives. “Indeed the Treaty and its verification regime, originally designed to restrain the nuclear arms race and nuclear proliferation, have become essential humanitarian safeguards, protecting the lives of large numbers of people,” says the Buddhist philosopher, author and peace-builder.

As CTBTO experts explained to IDN in Vienna, the global monitoring stations send gigabytes of data to the International Data Centre (IDC) at the CTBTO's headquarters in Vienna. The data are processed and distributed to the CTBTO's Member States in both raw and analyzed form.

Before taking up the post as the CTBTO’s Executive Secretary in August 2013, Lassina Zerbo served as the IDC Director. He has been instrumental in cementing the CTBTO’s position as the world’s centre of excellence for nuclear test-ban verification, as well as in driving forward efforts towards the entry into force and universalization of the CTBT.

Ikeda also offers proposals for the new Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) set up by the UN General Assembly to address concrete legal measures toward prohibition of nuclear weapons. The Group is preparing substantive sessions to work on the legal measures and norms to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. It will also make recommendations on interim nuclear risk-reduction measures.

85 countries and some civil society organizations participated in an informal session of the OEWG on January 28. Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi of Thailand was named as the OEWG Chair, and a provisional OEWG agenda was distributed.

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It envisages (a) concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons; and (b) recommendations on other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, including but not limited to:

Transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons; measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations; and additional measures to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of and interrelationship between the wide range of humanitarian consequences that would result from any nuclear detonation.

According to UNFOLD ZERO, support for the OEWG is also growing in parliaments and amongst civil society globally. UNFOLD ZERO is a new platform for United Nations focused initiatives and actions for the achievement of a nuclear weapons free world.

Mayors for Peace, an organization of over 6,800 cities, has sent an open letter to the OEWG urging all States – especially those possessing nuclear weapons and their umbrella states – to engage in constructive deliberations in the OEWG in order to pave the way for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

People for Nuclear Disarmament and the Human Survival Project have sent a Memo to Governments Participating in the OEWG highlighting the humanitarian and security imperative to immediately reduce nuclear risks and to take concurrent steps to prohibit and eliminate the weapons. The memo explores various options to abolish nuclear weapons, including a nuclear weapons convention, ban treaty and/or a 'building blocks' approach.

According to the Memo, it is possible that no one, single, approach will do the trick, and that momentum built up by one approach may facilitate progress with another, different approach.

Ikeda also cites hopeful developments, including the fact that over 120 states have endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge, a commitment to “stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons,” and growing calls for the abolition of nuclear weapons from civil society. He highlights efforts involving faith-based organizations and youth that the SGI has supported, including the International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition held in Hiroshima in August 2015.

Note: This is the third in a series of four articles flagged ‘CTBTO: Acronym of the Year’. The first titled ‘Banning The Bomb With Science And Diplomacy’ was published on January 20. The second headlined ‘Nuclear-Test-Ban Debate Focuses on Iran and North Korea’ was published on 31 January. [IDN-InDepthNews – 1 February 2016]

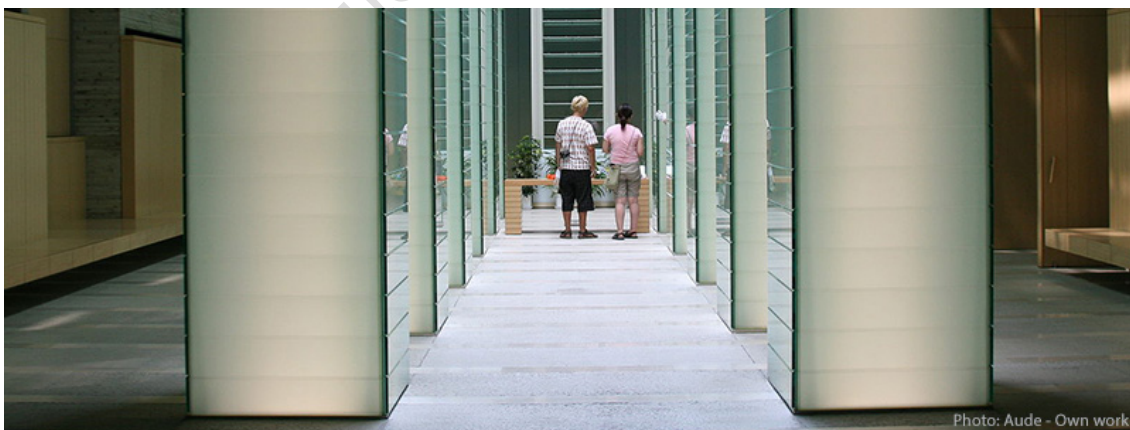


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