



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION
WITH MARCH 2014 ARTICLES

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Non-Nuclear Ukraine Haunts Security Summit in The Hague

By THALIF DEEN

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - The two-day, much-ballyhooed Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in the Netherlands, which concluded on March 25, was politically haunted by the upheaval in Ukraine – the former Soviet republic that renounced some 1,800 of its nuclear weapons in one of the world's most successful disarmament exercises back in 1994.

Still, it raised a question that has remained unanswered: Would Russian President Vladimir Putin have intervened militarily in Ukraine if it had continued to remain the world's third largest nuclear power, after the United States and Russia?

The only way in which the conflict would be different now – had Ukraine kept possession of its nuclear weapons after the collapse of the Soviet Union – “is that two nuclear-armed states would be testing each other's willingness to do the unthinkable in the midst of a political crisis,” John Loretz, programme director of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), told IPS.

“The claim that deterrence works and that, therefore, Ukraine would be more secure with nuclear weapons, is facile and unsupportable,” he said.

In an editorial on March 19, the Wall Street Journal said it is impossible to know whether Putin would have been so quick to invade Crimea if Ukraine had nuclear weapons.

“But it's likely it would have at least given him more pause,” the editorial said, arguing that Ukraine's fate “is likely to make the world's nuclear rogues, such as Iran and North Korea, even less likely to give up their nuclear facilities or weapons.”

And several Middle Eastern countries, including Saudi Arabia and perhaps Egypt, are contemplating their nuclear options should Iran go nuclear.

“Ukraine's fate will only reinforce those who believe these countries can't trust American assurances,” the Journal said.

Refuting that argument, Jonathan Granoff, president of the Global Security Institute, told IPS: “Let us presume that the Wall Street Journal's logic is correct.”

It would then follow that a core premise of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, is adverse to the security interests of over



180 nations, which, pursuant to the treaty, have eschewed these horrific devices, he pointed out.

“A treaty that undermines the security interests of the vast majority of nations is not likely to survive for long,” said Granoff, a senior adviser of the American Bar Association's Committee on Arms Control and National Security.

The better question, he argued, is whether the world is better off with more states with nuclear weapons or whether eliminating them universally, as the same treaty also demands, is the better course.

“If nuclear weapons were universally banned and the associated fear and hostility they engender diminished, would we be more able to soberly identify our shared interests in a more secure world?” he asked.

Dr. Ian Anthony, director of the European Security Programme at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), told IPS a secure nuclear future cannot be based on a total absence of risk, because that cannot be achieved. He said it follows that global nuclear security is not a final state, something that can be achieved once, and for all time.

“The instruments needed to reduce nuclear security risk will have to be continuously adapted in line with changing political, economic and technological conditions,” he said.

Anthony also said the long-term sustainability of the nuclear security effort will ultimately depend on successful multi-lateralisation of the process.

Some states with complex nuclear fuel cycles did not participate in the Nuclear Security Summit. At some point, these states will have to be engaged with and included, he added.

Picture above: U.S. President Barack Obama speaks at the Nuclear Security Summit 2014, with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte (far left). Credit: Dave de Vaal/cc by 2.0



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The Hague summit was aimed at preventing non-state actors and terrorists from getting their hands on nuclear weapons or nuclear materials.

The summit was the third in a series, the first being held in Washington DC in 2010, and the second in Seoul, South Korea, in 2012.

On the comparison with Ukraine, Granoff told IPS, "The myopia of the Wall Street Journal's perspective distorts empirically definable threats which can be ignored no longer, amongst them, surely is the ongoing threat of a use of a nuclear weapon by accident, design or madness."

He asked: "Would we not be better able to cooperate on the existential threats challenging every citizen of Russia, US, UK, China, India, Israel, Pakistan, France, North Korea and the Ukraine, such as stabilising the climate, protecting the rain forests and the health of the oceans, as well as the critically important global threats such as pandemic diseases, cyber security, terrorism, and financial markets?"

Loretz told IPS there is no proof that deterrence works, only that it has not yet failed. Anyone who believes that deterrence cannot fail – that it will work 100 percent of the time – is living in a fantasy world.

"One need only recall the 1962 Cuban missile crisis, where plain dumb luck had far more to do with averting catastrophe than any rational decision making – of which there was precious little," he said.

As more states acquire nuclear weapons, he pointed out, "we simply come closer to the day when deterrence fails

and nuclear weapons are used. Most countries came to this unavoidable conclusion decades ago, which is why we have the NPT and are so anxious to maintain its integrity until we can rid the world of nuclear weapons entirely."

Loretz said the recent humanitarian initiative emerging from the 2013 Oslo and 2014 Nayarit conferences (on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons) is based on an understanding that nuclear weapons themselves are the problem, regardless of who possesses them, and that the only sure way to prevent their use is to delegitimise and eliminate them.

"This humanitarian perspective trumps all claims for the political utility of nuclear weapons, which always boils down to a gamble that threatening to use them will cause an adversary to back down," he declared.

In the current crisis, he argued, that really would be a game of Russian roulette that no one should be playing.

"Let's assume, for the sake of argument, that Ukraine had kept its strategic nuclear weapons that remained behind when the Soviet Union broke apart," Loretz said.

"Would that have made the longstanding differences in the region any less intractable? Would Russia be any less inclined to flex its muscles in a region where it has major political and economic ambitions? Would Ukraine's relationship with Europe, particularly the NATO states, have been any less complicated or provocative to Russia?"

"No, no, and no," he declared. (IPS – March 26, 2014) □

Original <> <http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/03/non-nuclear-ukraine-haunts-security-summit-hague/>

Translations

Japanese Text Version

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/244-non-nuclear-ukraine-haunts-security-summit-in-the-hague-japanese>

Japanese PDF Version

http://www.nuclearabolition.info/documents/Japanese/Japanese_Non-Nuclear_Ukraine_Haunts_Security_Summit_in_The_Hague.pdf

ハーグ核安全保障サミットの話となった非核国ウクライナ

【国連IPS=タリフ・ディーン】

前評判が高かった「核安全保障サミット」(NSS)は、3月25日まで2日間にわたりオランダのハーグで開催されたが、ウクライナ騒乱をめぐる問題に政治的に終始してしまった。旧ソ連のウクライナは、1994年に約1800発の核兵器を廃棄し、世界でも最も成功した軍縮の取り組みだと評価されていた。



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Towards A Nuke-Free Sustainable Global Society

By RAMESH JAURA

BERLIN (IDN) - Describing the disorientation and anarchy in the aftermath of First World War in 1919, the Irish poet W. B. Yeats wrote in his renowned poem *The Second Coming*: "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold; / Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, / The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere / The ceremony of innocence is drowned; / The best lack all conviction, while the worst / Are full of passionate intensity." At a time when, despite the absence of a global war, things appear to be falling apart again, the Buddhist philosopher and educator Daisaku Ikeda does not despair and, in fact, shows the way to "value creation for global change".

To celebrate the anniversary of the founding of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) – a Tokyo-based lay Buddhist movement linking more than 12 million people around the world – he has offered "thoughts on how we can redirect the currents of the twenty-first century toward greater hope, solidarity and peace in order to construct a sustainable global society, one in which the dignity of each individual shines with its inherent brilliance".

In his *Peace Proposal 2014*, published on January 26, Ikeda offers specific suggestions focusing on three key areas critical to creating a sustainable global society: education for global citizenship; strengthening resilience in regions such as Asia and Africa by establishing regional cooperative mechanisms to reduce damage from extreme weather and disasters; and prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons.

Ikeda writes: "In light of the increasing incidence of (natural) disasters and extreme weather events in recent years (as well as severe humanitarian crises caused by international and domestic conflicts), there has been growing stress on the importance of enhancing the resilience of human societies – preparing for threats, managing crises and facilitating recovery."

Education for global citizenship

And this means: Realizing a hopeful future, rooted in people's natural desire to work together toward common goals and to sense progress toward those goals in a tangible way. Ikeda sees this as "an integral aspect of humankind's shared project to create the future -- a project in which anyone anywhere can participate and which lays the solid foundations for a sustainable global society".



Ikeda regards education for global citizenship with a particular focus on young people crucial for a sustainable global society. With an eye on the summit scheduled to take place in September 2015 to adopt a new set of global development goals, widely referred to as sustainable development goals (SDGs). Ikeda urges that targets related to education be included among these: specifically, to achieve universal access to primary and secondary education, to eliminate gender disparity at all levels and to promote education for global citizenship.

An educational program for global citizenship, the SGI President says, should deepen understanding of the challenges facing humankind; it should identify the early signs of impending global problems in local phenomena, empowering people to take action; and it should foster the spirit of empathy and coexistence with an awareness that actions that profit one's own country might have a negative impact or be perceived as a threat by other countries.

Another area that in his view should be a focus of the SDGs along with education is empowering youth. He suggests three guidelines to be included in establishing the SDGs: for all states to strive to secure decent work for all; for young people to be able to actively participate in solving the problems facing society and the world; and for the expansion of youth exchanges to foster friendship and solidarity transcending national borders.

Youth exchanges, in particular, help nurture friendship and ties that serve as a bulwark against the collective psychologies of hatred and prejudice. As such, the SGI President is of the view that their inclusion in the SDGs would be of great significance.

Photo above: SGI President Dr Daisaku Ikeda | Credit: SGI



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Regional cooperation for resilience

Ikeda's Peace Proposal 2014 also suggests the establishment of regional cooperative mechanisms to reduce damage from extreme weather and disasters, strengthening resilience in regions such as Asia and Africa. These would function alongside global measures developed under the UNFCCC, he says.

He calls for treating disaster preparedness, disaster relief and post-disaster recovery as an integrated process, and urges neighbouring countries to establish a system of cooperation for responding to disasters. "Through such sustained efforts to cooperate in strengthening resilience and recovery assistance, the spirit of mutual help and support can become the shared culture of the region," says an official synopsis of Ikeda's Peace Proposal 2014.

Ikeda suggests that the pioneering initiative for such regional cooperation be taken in Asia, a region that has been severely impacted by disasters. A successful model here will inspire collaboration in other regions, he adds. A foundation for this already exists in the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), which has a framework for discussing better cooperation. He calls on countries in the region to establish an Asia recovery resilience agreement, a framework drawing from the experience of the ARF.

The SGI President further recommends efforts to strengthen resilience through sister-city exchanges and cooperation, which provide an important basis for creating spaces of peaceful coexistence throughout the region. Currently, there are 354 sister-city agreements between Japan and China, 151 between Japan and South Korea and 149 between China and South Korea. Further, the Japan-China-South Korea Trilateral Local Government Conference has taken place annually since 1999 to further promote this kind of interaction.

Ikeda strongly proposes a Japan-China-South Korea summit to be held at the earliest to initiate dialogue toward this kind of cooperation, including cooperation on environmental problems. "The 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015, should serve as an impetus for further talks to explore the modalities of concretizing such cooperation," says Ikeda.

For a world free of nuclear weapons

The SGI President argues: "Natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunami are characterized by the fact that, while it may be possible to lessen their impact, it is impossible to prevent their occurrence. This is in sharp contrast to the threat posed by nuclear weapons, whose use would

wreak devastation on an even greater scale than that of natural disasters but which can be prevented and even eliminated through the clear exercise of political will by the world's governments."

In light of this, Ikeda regards the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons backbone of a sustainable global society. He argues that the Final Document of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference and the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo, Norway, in March 2013 have helped encourage efforts by a growing number of governments to place the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons at the centre of all discussions of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Since May 2012, these governments have repeatedly issued Joint Statements on this topic, and the fourth such statement, issued in October 2013, was signed by the governments of 125 states, including Japan and several other states under the nuclear umbrella of nuclear-weapon states.

Ikeda stresses the shared recognition that nuclear weapons fundamentally differ from other weapons, that they exist on the far side of a line which must not be crossed, and that it is unacceptable to inflict their catastrophic humanitarian consequences on any human being. This recognition, he says, holds the key to transcending the very idea that nuclear weapons can be used to realize national security objectives.

The SGI President reiterates his call for a nuclear abolition summit to be held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the atomic bombings of those cities. He hopes in particular that representatives of the countries that signed the Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons, as well as representatives of global civil society and, above all, youthful citizens from throughout the world, will gather in a world youth summit for nuclear abolition to adopt a declaration affirming their commitment to bringing the era of nuclear weapons to an end.

Parallel with this, he makes two concrete proposals. The first is for a nuclear weapons non-use agreement. This, in his view, would be a natural outcome of placing the catastrophic humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons use at the centre of the deliberations for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and it would be a means of advancing the implementation of Article VI of the NPT under which the nuclear-weapon states have committed to pursuing nuclear disarmament in good faith.



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Ikeda argues that the establishment of a non-use agreement, in which the nuclear-weapon states pledge, as an obligation rooted in the core spirit of the NPT, not to use nuclear weapons against states parties to the treaty, would bring an enhanced sense of physical and psychological security to states that have relied on the nuclear umbrella of their allies, opening the way to security arrangements that are not dependent on nuclear weapons.

His second specific proposal is to utilize the process that is developing around the Joint Statements on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons use to broadly enlist international public opinion and catalyse negotiations for the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

“It is important that we remember that even a non-use agreement is only a beachhead toward our ultimate goal – the prohibition and abolition of nuclear weapons. That goal will only be realized through accelerated efforts propelled by the united voices of global civil society.”

The SGI President points out that the world has “moved from an era in which the danger arose from the existence of conflict to one that is made dangerous by the continued existence of nuclear weapons”. He adds: “The intense con-

frontation of the Cold War provoked a sense of crisis, giving rise to a stance of mutual deterrence in which the two sides threatened each other with nuclear arsenals of unimaginable destructive capability.”

“In contrast, today it is the continued existence of nuclear weapons in itself that gives rise to insecurity, pushing new states to acquire nuclear weapons while leaving existing nuclear-weapon states convinced of the impossibility of relinquishing these arms.”

Yet another sound argument for doing away with nuclear weapons is that global economic crisis that began six years ago has eroded the fiscal standing of virtually every national government. And yet the global cost of maintaining these increasingly inutile weapons is an astonishing US\$100 billion a year.

Subsequently, more and more people are coming to see nuclear weapons as a burden weighing down national finances rather than an asset that enhances national prestige. “In light of all these factors,” says Ikeda, “the motivation of the nuclear-weapon states to take proactive steps to reduce the threat posed by the continued existence of these weapons should increase.”

[IDN-InDepthNews – March 19, 2014] □

Original <> <http://www.indepthnews.info/index.php/global-issues/2102-towards-a-nuke-free-sustainable-global-society>

Translations

Japanese Text Version

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/237-towards-a-nuke-free-sustainable-global-society-japanese>

核兵器なき持続可能なグローバル社会へ

【ベルリンIDN＝ラメシュ・ジャウラ】

アイルランドの詩人ウィリアム・バトラー・イエイツは、1919年の有名な詩「再臨（The Second Coming）」で、第一次大戦後の混乱と無秩序についてこう書いている。「世界はバラバラになり、中心は持ちこたえられない／無秩序がこの世にぶちまかれ／いたるところに血で濁りきった潮が押し寄せ／無垢な儀式（従来の慣習を重んじる伝統的な階級）を飲み込んでしまう／すべての信念が失われ、最悪が／熱を帯びて充滿している。」世界戦争こそ起きていないが、ふたたび世界がバラバラになっていくような現代、仏教哲学者で教育者の池田大作創価学会インタナショナル（SGI）会長は、希望を捨てず「グローバルな変化を引き起こすための価値を創造する」方途を示している。

Japanese PDF Version

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/documents/Japanese/Japanese Towards A Nuke-Free Sustainable Global Society.pdf>

NORWEGIAN

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/european/norwegian-swedish/234-towards-a-nuke-free-sustainable-global-society-norwegian>



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Three Conferences To Focus On Nuke-Free World

By JAMSHED BARUAH

BERLIN (IDN) - As tension mounts in relations between the U.S. and Russia on Ukraine amid apprehensions of a nuclear fallout, three international conferences scheduled for April 2014 have acquired added significance in promoting efforts towards nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

The first in the series is a meeting of foreign ministers on April 11-12 in Hiroshima, nearly two months after the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Mexico. It will be followed by an inter-faith conference organised by the Tokyo-based Soka Gakkai International (SGI) on April 24 in Washington. From April 28 to May 9 the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will hold its third session at the United Nations in New York.

The PrepCom is purported to prepare for the Review Conference in terms of assessing the implementation of each article of the NPT and facilitating discussion among States with a view to making recommendations to the Review Conference. The NPT, which entered into force in 1970 and was extended indefinitely in 1995, requires that review conferences be held every five years. The Treaty is regarded as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

NPDI

Promoting a world without nuclear weapons is also the objective of the Hiroshima ministerial meeting, which is part of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), backed by a coalition of states with Japan and Australia taking the lead. The coalition came into being in an effort to help implement the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, adopted by consensus.

Composed of Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, the NPDI has issued a series of declarations concerning the pace of NPT negotiations and the need to swiftly move on both non-proliferation and disarmament.

At its ministerial meeting in the Hague in April 2013, the NPDI resolved to "actively contribute to the work of the PrepCom including by submitting, for further elaboration by all State Parties, working papers on reducing the role of nuclear weapons, non-strategic nuclear weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT), the wider application of safeguards, nuclear weapons-free zones and export controls as well as an update of last

year's working paper on disarmament and non-proliferation education".

The resolution added: "We also firmly believe that universalization and early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) are essential steps to achieve nuclear disarmament. We welcome the ratification of the Treaty this year by Brunei Darussalam and Chad, bringing the total of ratifications to 159. . . . We appeal urgently to all countries that have not yet become Parties, in particular to the remaining eight States listed in Annex II of the Treaty, to sign and ratify the CTBT without further delay."

Further: "The Nuclear Weapon States have a particular responsibility to encourage ratification of the CTBT and we call on them to take the initiative in this regard. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, we call upon all States to refrain from nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions."

'Three Preventions' and 'Three Reductions'

The importance of the Hiroshima ministerial conference was underlined by Japan's Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida in a speech at the Nagasaki University on January 20, 2014. Kishida was born in Hiroshima, the first city to have been victimized by the first nuclear bomb ever deployed.

Kishida said, "Three Preventions' and 'Three Reductions' were the centerpiece of Japan's "basic thinking towards a world free of nuclear weapons".

The former are: "(1) prevention of the emergence of new nuclear weapon states, (2) prevention of the proliferation of nuclear-weapons-related materials and technologies, and (3) prevention of nuclear terrorism." The constitute: "(1) reduction of the number of nuclear weapons, (2) reduction of the role of nuclear weapons, and (3) reduction of the incentive for possession of nuclear weapons."

Implementation of such measures calls for active participation of the global civil society, says SGI President Daisaku Ikeda. "Where there is an absence of international political leadership, civil society should step in to fill the gap, providing the energy and vision needed to move the world in a new and better direction."



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"I believe that we need a paradigm shift, a recognition that the essence of leadership is found in ordinary individuals - whoever and wherever they may be - standing up and fulfilling the role that is theirs alone to play," he adds.

Ikeda writes in his 2013 Peace Proposal: "It is necessary to challenge the underlying inhumanity of the idea that the needs of states can justify the sacrifice of untold numbers of human lives and disruption of the global ecology. At the same time, we feel that nuclear weapons serve as a prism through which to bring into sharper focus ecological integrity, economic development and human rights - issues that our contemporary world cannot afford to ignore. This in turn helps us identify the elements that will shape the contours of a new, sustainable society, one in which all people can live in dignity."

Against this backdrop, an interfaith conference, initiated by SGI in Washington - the seat of the U.S. Administration and Congress - is of great importance.

Third PrepCom

Of crucial significance is the third PrepCom for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT. Hiroshima and Nagasaki will commemorate the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings in 2015. This and the G8 Summit in 2016 would, according to SGI President Ikeda, be an appropriate opportunity for an expanded summit for a nuclear-weapon-free world, which in his view should include the additional participation of representatives of the UN and non-G8 states in possession of nuclear weapons, as well as members of the five existing NWFZs - Antarctic Treaty, Latin American NWFZ (Tlatelolco Treaty), South Pacific NWFZ (Rarotonga Treaty), Southeast Asia NWFZ (Bangkok treaty), and African NWFZ (Pelindaba Treaty) - and other states which have taken a lead in calling for nuclear abolition.

Addressing the opening of the 2014 session of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament (CD) on January 21 in Geneva. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon that there

has been no breakthrough yet. "The pervasive cycle of pessimism in this body must still be overcome or else the CD will be overtaken by events," he said.

Sharing his thoughts on a possible way forward, the UN chief said that while the CD continues to seek the path towards renewed disarmament negotiations, it is important that it develop treaty frameworks and proposals through structured discussions. "Laying such a foundation for future negotiations would be a concrete first step towards revalidating the relevance of the Conference," he noted, adding that he hopes the body can make good progress before this spring's third preparatory meeting for the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

The vital significance of the third PrepCom is underlined by the fact that Egypt decided to withdraw from the second session in April 2013, in protest against "the continued failure of the conference" to implement a 1995 resolution to establish a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East. Egypt's Foreign Affairs ministry highlighted that the decision to postpone a conference to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East violated the decision made in the 2010 NPT conference to hold the conference in 2012. The ministry added that this "may affect the credibility of the NPT system".

The conference was originally scheduled to take place in 2012, but was postponed by the four sponsors, the UN, the United States, Russia and Britain because not all states in the region - Israel above all - has not agreed to attend.

In its statement the ministry accused "some of the parties to the NPT, as well as some non-state parties" of hindering the establishment of the conference. It added that Egypt has sought the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone since the launch of the initiative at the United Nations in 1974. It called on the member states of the treaty, the UN, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the international community to uphold their responsibility in implementing resolutions. [IDN-InDepthNews - March 15, 2014] □

Original <> <http://www.indepthnews.info/index.php/global-issues/2096-three-conferences-to-focus-on-nuke-free-world>

Translations

Japanese Text Version

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/227-three-conferences-to-focus-on-nuke-free-world-japanese>

Japanese PDF Version

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NORWEGIAN

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NATO and Russia Caught in New Nuclear Arms Race

By JULIO GODOY

BERLIN (IDN) - The U.S. government is unofficially accusing Russia of violating the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, by flight testing two-stage ground-based cruise missile RS-26. Although the U.S. government has not officially commented on the alleged Russian violation of the INF, which prohibits both countries to producing, testing and deploying ballistic and cruise missiles, and land-based missiles of medium (1,000 to 5,500 kilometres) and short (500 to 1,000 kilometres) range, high ranking members of the government in Washington have been leaking information to U.S. media, in a moment of particular tense relations with Moscow.

In 1987, after years of negotiations, both the NATO and the then Soviet Union agreed to destroy and to stop production of all missiles and related weapons, for instance the U.S. Pershing Ib and Pershing II and the BGM-109G Gryphon arsenals. Moscow, on its part, eliminated the whole SS missile series, including the SSC-X-4, in 1987 its most modern, land-based cruise missile with a nuclear warhead.

According to a report by the New York Times, the tested missile RS-26 aims at filling "the gap left in the missile potential of Russia as a result of the limitation of INF." The newspaper also indicated that mid-January, the acting Assistant Secretary of State Rose Gottemoeller informed the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) of the U.S. data.

U.S. military experts, such as Dan Blumenthal and Mark Stokes of the American Enterprise Institute, say that the main Russian problem with the INF is that China is not bound by it and continues to build up its own Intermediate-Range forces. In a comment for the Washington Post, Blumenthal and Stokes wrote that "Moscow has already threatened to pull out if China does not sign the treaty."

If the U.S. reports are true, the Russian tests would confirm what numerous peace and anti-nuclear weapons activists have been warning about since several years, that the NATO and Russia are engaged in a new nuclear arms race, despite all the bilateral talk about disarmament.

For the NATO has also been "filling the gaps" of its nuclear capability, in particular with the ongoing plan to "modernise" its arsenal of B61 nuclear weapons, stationed all over Western Europe.

Additionally, practically all nuclear states, including India, Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan have at one time or other in recent years improved their arsenal on middle range rockets and nuclear weapons.

The formidable B61 arsenal stationed in Europe is a remnant of the Cold War. The actual number of such weapons of mass destruction is a top military secret, but some 20 of

these are reported to be deployed in Germany, in the military basis near the village of Buechel, in the southwest of the country. Another undetermined number, up to 200 such weapons, are deployed in Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey, all members of the NATO.

According to the NATO, or, rather, to the U.S. government, the modernisation of this nuclear arsenal is necessary given the archaic character of the B61 weapons. They are so-called dumb or "gravity" weapons, to be dropped from war planes over target zones, and be guided by a radar that, according to U.S. senate hearings, was constructed in the 1960s and originally designed for "a five-year lifetime".

Dropping such dumb nuclear weapons from an airplane would mean that, even in case they operate as expected, vast areas would be obliterated from the face of the earth.

Additional dangers

The old B61 nuclear bombs manifest several additional dangers, especially for the own NATO armies and European populations: In 2005, a U.S. Air Force review discovered that procedures used during maintenance of the nuclear weapons in Europe held a risk that a lightning strike could trigger a nuclear detonation.

In 2008, yet another U.S. Air Force review concluded that "most" nuclear weapons locations in Europe did not meet U.S. security guidelines and would "require significant additional resources" to bring these up to standard.

All these risks were confirmed during several hearings at the U.S. congress late last year, and during which military officials explained the range of modernisation the B61 arsenal is expected to go through.

Officially, the U.S. government has dubbed this modernisation of the B61 arsenal "a full-scope Life Extension Program (LEP)", as Madelyn R. Creedon, assistant secretary of defence for global strategic affairs, told a session of subcommittee of the House of Representatives last October. [Read more: <http://www.hsd.org/?view&did=747337>]



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During the session, Creedon described the B61 as “the oldest warhead design in the U.S. nuclear stockpile, with several components dating from the 1960s.” She added that its modernisation “will meet military requirements and guarantee an extended service life coupled with more affordable sustainment costs; and it will incorporate the upgrades that (the National Nuclear Security Administration) NNSA deems mandatory to provide a nuclear stockpile that is safe, secure, and effective.”

During the same hearing, General C. R. Kehler, head of the U.S. strategic command, told the representatives what many peace activists have been saying since years, but the NATO always and only until recently denied. “The average B61 is over 25 years old, contains antiquated technology, and requires frequent handling for maintenance,” Kehler said. “Only through extraordinary measures has this aging family of weapons remained safe, secure and effective far beyond its originally planned operational life.”

If the schedule for the modernisation is to be respected, the new B61-12 weapons will be ready by 2020, and the programme would have cost at least eight billion U.S. dollars, according to the NNSA’s current estimate.

However, as the Centre for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation, a Washington, D.C.-based, non-partisan research organisation, has pointed out, an independent U.S. Defence Department assessment found that the actual cost could be higher than \$10 billion. At this price, the LEP will cost \$25 million per bomb. The Centre recalls too, that the Ploughshares Fund complained that at this cost each refurbished B61 will be worth more than its weight in gold.

According to critics of the LEP, the modernisation won’t mean only “a life extension programme”, but instead a formidable increase of the weapons’ capabilities.

Hans M. Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists, and one of the most distinguished civil experts on nuclear weapons, says that new features of the weapons contradict early pledges by U.S. authorities that the LEP “will not support new military missions (n)or provide for new military capabilities.”

However, new information about the LEP indicates precisely the contrary.

“The addition of a guided tail kit will increase the accuracy of the B61-12 compared with the other weapons and provide new warfighting capabilities,” Kristensen says. “The tail kit is necessary, officials say, for the 50-kilotons B61-12 (with a reused B61-4 warhead) to be able to hold at risk the same targets as the 360-kilotons B61-7 warhead. But

in Europe, where the B61-7 has never been deployed, the guided tail kit will be a significant boost of the military capabilities – an improvement that doesn’t fit the promise of reducing the role of nuclear weapons.”

For comparison, the ‘Little boy’ nuclear bomb with which the U.S. destroyed on August 6, 1945 the Japanese city of Hiroshima had an explosive yield of between 13 and 18 kilotons. The ‘Fat man’ bomb that destroyed Nagasaki three days later had a yield of up to 22 kilotons.

During the October 2013 hearings at the U.S. House of Representatives, it became also clear that B61-12 would replace the old B61-11, a single-yield 400-kiloton nuclear earth-penetrating bomb introduced in 1997, and the B83-1, a strategic bomb with variable yields up to 1,200 kilotons.

For Kristensen, “The(se) military capabilities of the B61-12 will be able to cover the entire range of military targeting missions for gravity bombs, ranging from the lowest yield of the B61-4 (0.3 kilotons) to the 1,200-kiloton B83-1 as well as the nuclear earth-penetration mission of the B61-11.”

Such upgrading of the destruction capabilities would make the new arsenal an “all-in-one nuclear bomb on steroids, spanning the full spectrum of gravity bomb missions anywhere.”

Most problematic

This extraordinary improvement of the B61 arsenal’s mass destruction potential is the most problematic, for the European governments concerned, in particular in Germany, have since at least 2009 openly expressed their wishes to dismantle the weapons.

In reaction to the historic speech U.S. president Barack Obama made in the Czech capital Prague in April 2009, where he called the nuclear weapons spread across the world “the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War”, the Berlin government of the time argued in favour of the dismantling the archaic B61 stationed on German soil.

In what it was called “an unprecedented statement”, Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Social Democratic German foreign minister of the time, called for the withdrawal of the U.S. nuclear weapons deployed in his country. In April 2009, only days after Obama’s speech in Prague, Steinmeier told the German magazine Der Spiegel that “the (B61 nuclear) weapons are militarily obsolete today” and promised that he would take steps to ensure that the remaining U.S. warheads “are removed from Germany.”



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In the two years that followed, the next German conservative government, represented by its new foreign minister Guido Westerwelle, continued to make the case for dismantling the B61 arsenal. Like his predecessor Steinmeier, Westerwelle, serving for the Christian Democratic-Liberal ruling coalition, made the arguments of the anti-nuclear weapons activists his own, and recalled that such arsenal is in many ways obsolete, for it was conceived to be used in conjunction with other armament that itself is out of use, and it aimed at an enemy – the Soviet bloc – that had ceased to exist.

On March 2010, a large majority of the German parliament, the Bundestag, passed a resolution unequivocally demanding the withdrawal of the “U.S. nuclear weapons from German soil.”

But both Steinmeier and Westerwelle failed at convincing the NATO in general, and the U.S. government in particular, to follow. Instead, they had to kowtow before the fait accompli decided in Washington, that the B61 arsenal be modernised to become, to again use Hans Kristensen’s aptly description, an “all-in-one nuclear bomb on steroids.”

TRANSLATIONS

Chinese Text Version

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/242-nato-and-russia-caught-in-new-nuclear-arms-race-chinese>

北约与俄罗斯陷入新一轮核军备竞赛

【柏林IDN=由胡里奥·戈多伊】

美国政府非官方地指责俄罗斯违反了1987年的中程核力量条约（INF），因为俄罗斯飞行测试了两段式RS-26陆基巡航导弹。

INF条约禁止这两国生产、测试以及部署导弹和巡航导弹，以及中（1,000至5,500公里）短（500至1,000公里）射程的陆基导弹，虽然美国政府还没有对俄罗斯涉嫌违背INF条约做出官方的评论，但美国华盛顿政府的高级官员却在眼下与莫斯科关系特别紧张的时刻向美国媒体透露了这个消息。

Chinese PDF Version

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/documents/Chinese NATO and Russia Caught in New Nuclear Arms Race Chinese.pdf>

JAPANESE TEXT VERSION

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/221-nato-and-russia-caught-in-new-nuclear-arms-race-japanese>

JAPANESE PDF VERSION

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/documents/Japanese/Japanese NATO and Russia%20 caught in New Nuclear Arms Race.pdf>

Steinmeier is again foreign minister, but he long ago ceased to discuss the matter in public. He may have “gotten shell-shocked by the pushback from the old nuclear guard in NATO,” as Kristensen said of Westerwelle on the same question.

At least, Steinmeier less than two years ago signed a declaration by a group of German parliamentarians representing all political parties, in which they insisted that the U.S. nuclear arsenal be removed from Germany. In the declaration, Steinmeier, at the time leader of the social Democratic parliamentary group, and colleagues accused the then ruling conservative Christian Democratic-Liberal coalition of having failed at reaching the same goal. “Worst still: By now it seems as if the government has said goodbye to this goal.”

The same accusation can be made this time against Steinmeier, again German foreign minister: He has not lived up to his own conviction, that the NATO nuclear weapons must be removed from European soil. The new NATO-Russia crisis caused by the turmoil in Ukraine will certainly help him to argue his change of mind. [IDN-In-DepthNews – March 6, 2014] □



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What Others Say

Exploring the Path Toward A Nuclear-free World

By DAISAKU IKEDA*

TOKYO (IPS) - This past February, the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons was held in Nayarit, Mexico, as a follow-up to the first such conference held last year in Oslo, Norway. The conclusion reached by this conference, on the basis of scientific research, was that “no State or international organisation has the capacity to address or provide the short and long term humanitarian assistance and protection needed in case of a nuclear weapon explosion.”

As this makes clear, almost 70 years after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, humanity remains defenceless in the face of the catastrophic effects that any use of nuclear weapons would inevitably produce.

Since May 2012, a succession of four joint statements warning of the dire humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons have been issued. These statements have drawn support from a growing number of states; the Nayarit conference was attended by the representatives of 146 countries.

In summing up the outcome of the conference, the Chair stressed the need for a legal framework outlawing these weapons, whose very existence is contrary to human dignity, stating that the time has come to initiate a diplomatic process to realise this goal. It is highly significant that three-quarters of the member states of the United Nations have expressed their shared desire for a world without nuclear weapons in this way.

Regrettably, the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, the nuclear-weapon states recognised under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), did not attend this meeting. What is needed most at this juncture is to find a common language shared by the countries signing these joint statements and the nuclear-weapon states.

The movement to focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has emerged against the backdrop of grassroots efforts by global civil society calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons. Crucially, this has included the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, who have long raised their voices in the cry that no one must ever again experience the horror of nuclear war.

On the other hand, the experience of being in possession of the “nuclear button” that would launch a devastating

strike has steadily impressed on several generations of political leaders in the nuclear-weapon states the reality that nuclear weapons are unlike other armaments and cannot be considered militarily useful weapons. This has served as a restraint against their use.

In this sense, the two sides share a sentiment that can bridge the gulf between them – the desire never to witness or experience the catastrophic humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons. This can serve as the basis for a common language with which to explore the path towards a world without nuclear weapons.

I have repeatedly called for a nuclear abolition summit to be held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki next year in 2015, the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of those cities. I hope that representatives of the nuclear-weapon states, the countries that have signed the Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons, as well as representatives of global civil society and, above all, youthful citizens from throughout the world, will gather in a world youth summit for nuclear abolition to adopt a declaration affirming their commitment to end dependence on nuclear weapons and bring the era of nuclear weapons to a close.

In this connection, I would like to offer some concrete proposals.

The first is for a nuclear weapons non-use agreement. One means of achieving this would be to place the catastrophic humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons use at the centre of the deliberations for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Such an agreement would advance the implementation of Article VI of the NPT, under which the nuclear-weapon states have committed to pursuing nuclear disarmament in good faith.

*Daisaku Ikeda is a Japanese Buddhist philosopher and peace-builder and president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) grassroots Buddhist movement (www.sgi.org). The full text of Ikeda's 2014 Peace Proposal can be viewed at <http://www.sgi.org/sgi-president/proposals/peace/peace-proposal-2014.html>



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Regions such as Northeast Asia and the Middle East, which are not currently covered by nuclear-weapon-free zones, could take advantage of a non-use agreement to declare themselves “nuclear weapon non-use zones,” as a preliminary step to becoming nuclear-weapon-free. It is my strong hope that Japan – which signed the most recent iteration of the joint statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons even while remaining under the nuclear umbrella of the United States – will reawaken to its responsibility as a country that has experienced atomic weapons attack. Japan should play a leading role in the establishment of such a non-use agreement and non-use zones.

In parallel with such efforts within the existing NPT regime, I would also call upon the international community to fully utilise the process now developing around the successive joint statements to broadly enlist international public opinion and catalyse negotiations for the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

This could take the form of a treaty expressing the commitment, made in light of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, to the future relinquishment of reliance on these weapons as a means of achieving security, coupled with separate protocols defining con-

*Daisaku Ikeda is a Japanese Buddhist philosopher and peace-builder and president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) grassroots Buddhist movement (www.sgi.org). The full text of Ikeda’s 2014 Peace Proposal can be viewed at <http://www.sgi.org/sgi-president/proposals/peace/peace-proposal-2014.html>

Original <> <http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/03/exploring-path-towards-nuclear-free-world/>

TRANSLATIONS

JAPANESE TEXT VERSION

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/235-exploring-the-path-towards-a-nuclear-free-world>

核兵器のない世界への道筋（池田大作創価学会インタナショナル会長）

【IPSコラム＝池田大作】

「核兵器の人的影響」をテーマにした国際会議が、昨年のオスロでの会議に続いて、2月にメキシコで行われた科学的検証に基づき、そこで出されたのが次の結論である。

「核兵器爆発の場合に、適切に対処し、または必要とされる短期的、長期的人道支援と保護を提供できる能力を持つ国や国際機関は存在しない」広島と長崎への原爆投下から来年で70年を迎えるが、今もって、核兵器の使用がもたらす壊滅的な結果から、人々の生命と尊厳を守る手段など、世界のどこにもありはしないのだ。

JAPANESE PDF VERSION

http://www.nuclearabolition.info/documents/Japanese/Japanese_Exploring_the_Path_Towards_a_Nuclear-free_World.pdf



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Parliaments Want A Nuclear-Weapon-Free World

By JAMSHED BARUAH

GENEVA (IDN) - More than 163 parliaments from around the world, constituting the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), have adopted a landmark resolution urging parliaments to “work with their governments on eliminating the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines” and to “urge their governments to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or package of agreements to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world”.

The resolution, *Toward a Nuclear Weapon Free World: The Contribution of Parliaments*, adopted on March 20 also implores parliaments to “use all available tools including committees to monitor national implementation of disarmament commitments, including by scrutinising legislation, budgets and progress reports” and promote and commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on September 26.

The resolution, adopted after 12 months of consultations and negotiations, further asks parliaments to work together with their governments and civil society to build momentum for a constructive Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in 2015, ratify and implement existing non-proliferation and disarmament treaties and agreements, including the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, Convention on Nuclear Terrorism, IAEA nuclear safeguards agreements and the Action Plan from the 2010 NPT Review Conference, and strengthen existing nuclear-weapon-free zones as well as support their expansion and the establishment of new zones, especially a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

The Resolution also welcomes the first conference in Oslo (Norway) and the second in Narayit (Mexico) on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and the emergence of other multilateral approaches and initiatives including the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations. It also encourages parliamentarians to engage in multi-party networks like Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (PNND) in order to support effective parliamentary action.

Alyn Ware, PNND’s Global Coordinator says in a web posted statement: “This resolution demonstrates the growing understanding by parliamentarians that their responsibilities extend beyond those of their political parties and national positions to a shared obligation to the global common good and the security of future generations. Parliamentarians from non-nuclear countries, nuclear-armed countries and countries under extended nuclear deterrence doctrines came together to challenge governments



to emerge from behind their complacency or cloaks of nuclear deterrence, and to act resolutely to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world.”

The issue of nuclear weapons was chosen by the IPU, from among a number of key security issues, as its focus for peace and security for 2013-2014, due to the importance of this topic for human survival.

Destructive effects

“On-going efforts by a few States to develop nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them threaten regional and global peace and security,” said Blaine Calkins from Canada, one of the co-rapporteurs of IPU Standing Committee on Peace and International Security which facilitated the drafting, deliberations and adoption of the resolution.

PNND Co-President Saber Chowdhury from Bangladesh, who also served as the President of the IPU Standing Committee for the past four years, introduced the resolution by quoting the historic conclusion of the International Court of Justice that “the destructive effects of nuclear weapons cannot be contained in time or space”.

“Parliamentary action worldwide should aim to eliminate the concept of nuclear deterrence once and for all,” said Yolanda Ferrer from Cuba, the other co-rapporteur of the IPU Standing Committee. “It encourages the perpetual possession of nuclear weapons and justifies the use of huge sums to modernize nuclear arsenals, funds that could be invested to solve the most pressing problems facing the world’s population, such as hunger, poverty and unhealthy living conditions.”

“Parliamentarians can play a key role in moving governments to implement their shared commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons,” said Calkins. “Among other things, they can: hold governments to account and ensure compliance with commitments and responsibilities under the NPT; convince governments to accept new commitments, mechanisms and responsibilities as required; and, mobilize public opinion and civil society to demand faster and deeper action.” [IDN-InDepthNews – March 21, 2014]

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U.S.-Russia Bickering May Trigger Nuclear Fallout

By THALIF DEEN

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - The U.S.-Russian confrontation over Ukraine, which is threatening to undermine current bilateral talks on North Korea, Iran, Syria and Palestine, is also in danger of triggering a nuclear fallout. Secretary of State John Kerry told U.S. legislators that if the dispute results in punitive sanctions against Russia, things could “get ugly fast” and go “in multiple directions.” Perhaps one such direction could lead to a nuclear impasse between the two big powers.

According to a state agency news report from Moscow, Russia has threatened to stop honouring its arms treaty commitments, and more importantly, to block U.S. military inspections of nuclear weapons, if Washington decides to suspend military cooperation with Moscow.

These mostly bilateral treaties between the United States and Russia include the 1994 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), the 2010 new START, the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) treaty and the 1970 international Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

A nuclear tug-of-war between the two big powers is tinged in irony because post-Soviet Ukraine undertook one of the world’s most successful nuclear disarmament programmes when it agreed to destroy all its weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

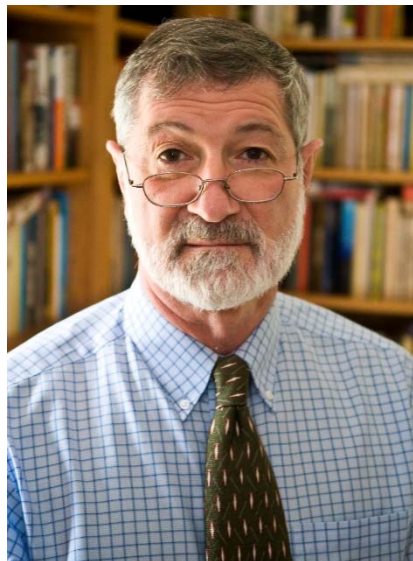
Dr. Rebecca E. Johnson, executive director of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament and Diplomacy, told IPS, “Clearly the situation between Ukraine and Russia is deeply worrying.

“Without going into the politics of the situation on the ground, as I don’t have the kind of regional expertise for that, this is not a place for issuing nuclear threats or scoring nuclear points,” she said.

“I’ve been disgusted to see some British and French representatives try to use Ukraine’s crisis to justify retaining nuclear weapons in perpetuity.”

Russia is not directly threatening to attack Ukraine with nuclear weapons, and no one believes it would be useful for the United States and countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) to threaten Russia with a nuclear attack, no matter what they do, said Johnson.

Ukraine, which was once armed with the third largest nuclear arsenal after the United States and Russia, and pos-



essed more nukes than France, Britain and China, dismantled and shipped its weapons to Russia for destruction beginning in 1994.

Dr. Ira Helfand, co-president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), said Ukraine is commendable in being one of the few states to have given up its nuclear weapons peacefully, and the people of Ukraine should not have to fear nuclear weapons ravaging their country.

“Any war involves a terrible and lasting human toll, risks spreading and harming people’s health in the region and beyond,” he warned.

In a statement released last week, IPPNW said it underscores the absolute imperative to avoid the possibility of use of nuclear weapons.

“This danger exists with any armed conflict involving nuclear armed states or alliances, which could escalate in uncontrollable, unintended and unforeseeable ways,” it warned.

Dr Tilman A. Ruff, co-chair, International Steering Group and Australian Board member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, told IPS the current agreements (e.g. START, New START and INF) are probably most important in that they demonstrate that verified reductions and elimination of whole classes of nuclear weapons are feasible, and hopefully reduce the risk of nuclear war between Russia and the United States.

However, continuing massive nuclear arsenals on both sides; the retention of almost 1,800 nuclear weapons on hair-trigger alert missiles, ready to be launched within minutes; the aggressive eastward expansion of NATO, contrary to what Russian leaders were promised; and the rapid escalation of tension over recent events in Ukraine demonstrate the Cold War has not been firmly laid to rest.

Photo above: Dr. Ira Helfand



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“Any confrontation between nuclear-armed states runs the risk of escalating to the use of nuclear weapons, whether by inadvertence, accident, or bad decision-making,” said Dr Ruff, who is also an associate professor at the Nossal Institute for Global Health, School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne.



Politicians that want to keep French or British nuclear weapons need to stop making arguments that undermine the NPT and encourage proliferators, she pointed out.

“It is extraordinarily irresponsible to jump on the bandwagon of this dangerous regional crisis and make Ukrainians feel that they were wrong to rid their newly independent country of nuclear weapons in 1992 and join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon states,” Johnson said.

He said currently all the nuclear-armed states are massively investing in keeping and modernising their nuclear arsenals, and show no serious commitment to disarm, as they are legally bound to do. As long as nuclear weapons exist and are deployed, and policies countenance their possible use, the danger they will be used is real and present.

It is clearly unacceptable for states armed with nuclear weapons to threaten non-nuclear nations, but this cannot be turned into a rationale either for risking nuclear war between Russia and NATO or for the non-nuclear countries to pull out of the NPT and start arming themselves with nuclear arsenals of their own, she noted.

“The dangerous and unstable situation in Ukraine highlights this starkly, and should dispel any notion that nuclear danger ended 20 years ago with apparent end of the Cold War,” he said.

As brought to the forefront through the recent Oslo and Nayarit conferences on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, nuclear weapons need to be stigmatised, banned and eliminated, she added.

Dr Johnson told IPS Russian and U.S. nuclear weapons in the region are demonstrably not contributing to deterrence.

“Only by removing these weapons of mass destruction from all countries’ arsenals will we be able to fairly address the security needs and aspirations of all peoples – whether in non-nuclear or nuclear-armed countries,” she added. (IPS – March 14, 2014) □

“If anything, their presence complicates the current dangers, with the attendant risks of crisis instability and potential military or nuclear escalation or miscalculations, though I’d hope no one would be mad enough to actually use them,” she said.

Photo: Vitaly I. Churkin (left), Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the UN, addresses the Security Council meeting on the situation in Ukraine on Mar. 13, 2014. Credit: UN Photo/Evan Schneider

Original <> <http://www.ipsnews.net/2014/03/u-s-russia-bickering-may-trigger-nuclear-fallout/>



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What Others Say

'Now Is The Time' For Middle East Nuke-Free Zone

By JAYA RAMACHADRAN

BERLIN (IDN) - The eminent Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) has revived the issue of a Middle East nuclear weapon-free zone (NWFZ), first proposed in 1962. Discussions on the subject have been frozen since the last quarter of 2012, when a planned United Nations conference on the region came to naught in the face of Israel's opposition.

In fact, if further proliferation is to be prevented in the Middle East, and regional security enhanced, "now is the time to convene the conference mandated by the 2010 NPT Review Conference," says Tariq Rauf in an essay posted on the SIPRI website.

"The process for establishing a NWFZ in the Middle East will not be easy," he cautions, "but the experience of other regions with such zones suggests that political will and leadership are crucial."

NWFZs have already been established in Latin America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, South East Asia, Africa and Central Asia, with a view to reducing the role of nuclear weapons in international security and preventing the emergence of new nuclear-weapon states.

"These established NWFZs are of particular relevance to an examination of the material obligations to be included in the verification regime of a future NWFZ in the Middle East," states Rauf.

He is of the view that a Middle East NWFZ would require the dismantlement of Israel's nuclear weapon capabilities under international verification. "Compliance by states with CSAs (Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement) will also need to be assessed," he adds.

He recalls: "The 2010 Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) agreed that the United Nations Secretary-General, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States should convene a conference in 2012, to be attended by all states in the Middle East, on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons, and other weapons of mass destruction, in keeping with the mandate of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference."

However, in November 2012 the USA unilaterally announced that it would not be convened due to the situation prevailing in the region.



Rauf points out that all states of the Middle East region except for Israel are parties to the NPT and have undertaken to accept comprehensive IAEA safeguards. Arab states of the Middle East maintain that the establishment of a NWFZ would contribute to the conclusion of a peace settlement in the region.

However, Israel takes the view that a Middle East NWFZ, as well as other regional security issues, cannot be addressed in isolation from

the establishment of a lasting peace and stable regional security conditions.

These issues, according to Israel, should be addressed within the framework of a regional multilateral security and confidence-building process, says Rauf, an internationally respected authority on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues and currently the director of SIPRI's arms control and non-proliferation programme. From 2002 to 2011 he headed the Verification and Security Policy Coordination Office at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

In that capacity he dealt with high-priority verification cases involving Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, South Korea and Syria. He was also the Alternate Head of the IAEA delegation to NPT conferences from 2003 to 2010, and the IAEA Liaison and Point-of-Contact for a number of multilateral control regimes and United Nations Security Council committees.

Rauf writes: "Effective verification is an important measure of arms control agreements that aims at creating confidence between states. In the Middle East, with a legacy of fear and mistrust, the creation of such confidence would require verification arrangements that are far-reaching and comprehensive. NWFZs are of relevance not only to the parties directly involved, but also to states bordering the region and to the wider international community."

Photo above: The Dimona Reactor Dome Credit: Mordechai Vanunu



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According to Rauf, this underscores the need for a verification regime that creates the necessary confidence among the parties to the NWFZ agreement and in the international community at large.

“Verification arrangements under existing NWFZ agreements, which provide for international inspection through the IAEA and for regional structures that may be invoked in specified circumstances, can be replicated in a NWFZ in the Middle East in order to help meet both regional and global concerns,” he adds.

Safeguards

Rauf is of the view that in a NWFZ in the Middle East, each state party would be required to conclude and bring into force a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA. “In a non-nuclear-weapon state with a CSA in force with the IAEA pursuant to a NWFZ agreement and the NPT, any undeclared reprocessing or enrichment would constitute a clear violation of the provisions of the CSA.”

The eminent expert considers the verification of nuclear fuel cycle activities essential in order to ensure their exclusively peaceful use. This is because technologies that enable the enrichment of uranium and the separation of plutonium are regarded as sensitive because they can be used to make both fuel for nuclear power reactors and the generation of electricity, and nuclear weapons.

According to Rauf, the cost and effort required in the application of IAEA safeguards at declared reprocessing plants can vary from almost no cost for decommissioned or abandoned facilities to continuous inspection costing tens of millions of dollars.

The SIPRI expert adds: “Reprocessing operations normally involve the release of gaseous fission products into the atmosphere and the release of particulates, some of which are deposited at significant distances from the facility.”

It is possible to detect clandestine plants through enhanced information analysis, complementary access and environmental sampling. But the safeguards approach for

an enrichment plant will also depend on the operational status of the facility, he adds.

“The methods used to detect undeclared enrichment plants are essentially the same as for undeclared reprocessing. Enrichment operations normally result in the release of aerosols – especially at locations where connections to the process piping are made, but also through the plant ventilation system.

These aerosols may not travel very far, and thus environmental sampling is only likely to be effective close to such facilities,” writes Rauf.

According to him, the difficulty in finding emissions from clandestine enrichment plants is further compounded by advances in enrichment technology that greatly reduce the size of plants and reduce their electrical power requirements.

The SIPRI expert assures that verification measures applied in a Middle East NWFZ would benefit from a system that parallels the existing strengthened IAEA safeguards system based on CSAs supplemented by an Additional Protocol.

Such measures are designed to track all nuclear material in use in a state taking account of current and future technological developments, which may help increase the level of assurance of non-proliferation provided by safeguards practices. In addition, they provide increased assurances with respect to the detection of undeclared facilities and fissile material.

The SIPRI expert concludes that in order to provide states party to a NWFZ in the Middle East with a level of assurance analogous to the assurance provided by the IAEA under comprehensive safeguards agreements, the verification system would have to apply to the entire nuclear fuel cycle in those states and be geared to the detection of undeclared production facilities and nuclear material, through the supplementary verification tools provided by an Additional Protocol. [IDN-InDepthNews – March 2, 2014] □



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Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons: Where is this Going?

By HEATHER WILLIAMS

Research Fellow on Nuclear Weapons Policy at Chatham House

When I told nuclear experts and policy-makers in many of the Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) that I would be attending the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impacts of Nuclear Weapons in Nayarit, Mexico, 13-14 February, the most common response- aside from weather envy- was a question: 'Where is this initiative going?' After two days, the answer to that question was both obvious and complicated. Simply, the initiative is heading to Vienna, which will host the next conference. The complicated answer is in relation to the political direction of the initiative itself, but discussions in Nayarit suggested it will take on more of a risk lens, and there will be increasing pressure on the NWS, which thus far have not participated in the initiative, to attend the Vienna meeting.

The Nayarit Conference is the most recent milestone in the humanitarian impacts initiative, which included mention in the 2010 NPT Action Plan and a 2013 inaugural conference in Oslo. The first day and a half of the Nayarit Conference were similar in style and scope to the Oslo Conference and included testimony of Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors, factual presentations on the challenges of responding to a nuclear weapons detonation and new research on the risks of nuclear weapons. Like Oslo, the Nayarit Conference brought together a wide range of communities including civil society, governments, and academia; and broadened the discourse on nuclear weapons with a facts-based discussion about the effects of nuclear detonations.

Nayarit was not a repeat of Oslo, however, and differed in several ways. Participation was greater in Mexico with 146 states, compared with 128 in Norway. Not only did more states attend, but also more spoke and represented a wider spectrum of views. Substantively, Nayarit differed from Oslo in three important ways. First, the NPT and the 2015 Review Conference loomed large in many discussions and there were more calls to ensure the humanitarian impacts initiative works within and in support of the NPT. Second, states were more vocal in calls for NWS participation in the Vienna Conference and urged the Austrian convenor to solicit their participation. And finally, the Chair, Mexico's Vice Minister for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, Ambassador Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, closed the conference with a summary, peppered with some controversial Chair's remarks.

The Chair stated 'The broad-based and comprehensive discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should lead to the commitment of states and civil society to reach new international standards and norms, through a legally binding instrument.' This language would suggest the initiative is working towards a nuclear weapon ban; however, it comes with an important caveat. As stated explicitly, these remarks belonged to Ambassador Gómez Robledo and did not represent a group consensus. Indeed, many states expressed skepticism and suggested it is too early to discuss a ban in this or any forum.

Numerous delegates emphasized that this initiative must support and be seen to support the NPT, which remains the foundation of nonproliferation efforts. This is especially true for the initiative's instigators, namely Norway, Mexico, Austria, Ireland, Switzerland, and New Zealand. However, the NWS continue to portray the initiative as a distraction from the NPT with the potential to undermine it. This is clearly not the intent of the initiative. As one example, even India stated that the initiative must 'do no harm' to the Treaty. Given current frustrations within the NPT

and decades-long stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament, the humanitarian impacts initiative continues to provide an opportunity to engage with states such as India and Pakistan on nuclear weapons issues and has the potential to rebuild trust between NWS and NNWS.

Participation would provide the NWS with an opportunity not only to rebuild trust and engage with the issue of humanitarian consequences on a substantive level, but also to help ensure a successful NPT Review Conference in 2015. In the country statements, which have not yet been made available online, numerous NATO members, along with India, Pakistan, and Egypt, explicitly called for involving the NWS as an important next step for the initiative. Five NATO states that participated in Oslo did not do so in Nayarit (Croatia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Portugal). Convincing one, any, or all of the NWS to engage with the initiative and attend Vienna will be a challenge. The content of the Chair's Summary – particularly the talk of a ban – could scare off the NWS and indeed has reinforced some of the skepticism around the initiative. Yet the NWS are poised to play a unique and important role in the initiative by contributing their own research on nuclear weapons effects, and, perhaps, leading a discussion on response plans and coordination. Given that they have lived with these weapons and their potential consequences for decades, they are likely to have devoted more research and attention to these questions than anyone. Indeed, recent suggestions from the United States to hold a meeting on the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons testing would be very much welcomed and could form the basis for a combined future approach.

So where is this going? Perhaps the more appropriate question is rather, what will determine success in Vienna? Certainly there is an expectation that the Vienna Conference will sustain momentum for reframing the nuclear discourse with wide participation, new research, emphasis on the facts and effects of a nuclear detonation and tests, and, most importantly, lining up a host for a follow-on conference. Participation of at least one NWS would also be an indicator of success. The United States and United Kingdom, in particular, have demonstrated such leadership in the past, such as with the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty negotiations. And finally, the Vienna Conference will occur a few months before the 2015 NPT Review Conference. This is an opportunity to set the tone going into the Review Conference, strengthen the relationships underpinning the NPT, and to further expand the nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation discourse. □

(Source: <http://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/>)



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Why Russia Calls A Limited Nuclear Strike "De-Escalation"

By NIKOLAI N. SOKOV*

In 1999, at a time when renewed war in Chechnya seemed imminent, Moscow watched with great concern as NATO waged a high-precision military campaign in Yugoslavia. The conventional capabilities that the United States and its allies demonstrated seemed far beyond Russia's own capacities. And because the issues underlying the Kosovo conflict seemed almost identical to those underlying the Chechen conflict, Moscow became deeply worried that the United States would interfere within its borders.

By the next year, Russia had issued a new military doctrine whose main innovation was the concept of "de-escalation"—the idea that, if Russia were faced with a large-scale conventional attack that exceeded its capacity for defense, it might respond with a limited nuclear strike. To date, Russia has never publically invoked the possibility of de-escalation in relation to any specific conflict. But Russia's policy probably limited the West's options for responding to the 2008 war in Georgia. And it is probably in the back of Western leaders' minds today, dictating restraint as they formulate their responses to events in Ukraine.

Game-changer. Russia's de-escalation policy represented a reemergence of nuclear weapons' importance in defense strategy after a period when these weapons' salience had decreased. When the Cold War ended, Russia and the United States suddenly had less reason to fear that the other side would launch a surprise, large-scale nuclear attack. Nuclear weapons therefore began to play primarily a political role in the two countries' security relationship. They became status symbols, or insurance against unforeseen developments. They were an ultimate security guarantee, but were always in the background—something never needed.

Then a very different security challenge began to loom large in the thinking of Russia's political leaders, military officers, and security experts. That challenge was US conventional military power. This power was first displayed in its modern incarnation during the Gulf War of 1990 and 1991—but the game-changer was the Kosovo conflict. In Yugoslavia the United States utilized modern, high-precision conventional weapons to produce highly tangible results with only limited collateral damage. These conventional weapons systems, unlike their nuclear counterparts, were highly usable.

The Russian response, begun even before the conflict over Kosovo had ended, was to develop a new military doctrine. This effort was supervised by Vladimir Putin, then-secretary of Russia's Security Council, a body similar to the National Security Council in the United States. By the time the doctrine was adopted in the spring of 2000, it was Putin who signed it in his new capacity as president.

The doctrine introduced the notion of de-escalation—a strategy envisioning the threat of a limited nuclear strike that would force an opponent to accept a return to the status quo ante. Such a threat is envisioned as deterring the United States and its allies from involvement in conflicts in which Russia has an important stake, and in this sense is essentially defensive. Yet, to be effective, such a threat also must be credible. To that end, all large-scale military exercises that Russia conducted beginning in 2000 featured simulations of limited nuclear strikes.

De-escalation rests on a revised notion of the scale of nuclear use. During the Cold War, deterrence involved the threat of inflicting unacceptable damage on an enemy. Russia's de-escalation strategy provides instead for infliction of "tailored damage," defined as "damage [that is] subjectively unacceptable to the opponent [and] exceeds the benefits the aggressor expects to gain as a result of the use of military force." The efficacy of threatening tailored damage assumes an asymmetry in a conflict's stakes. Moscow reasoned when it adopted the policy that, for the United States, intervening on behalf of Chechen rebels (for example) might seem a desirable course of action for a variety of reasons. But it would not be worth the risk of a nuclear exchange. Russia, however, would perceive the stakes as much higher and would find the risk of a nuclear exchange more acceptable. Indeed, in the early 2000s, Russian military experts wrote that US interference in the war in Chechnya could have resulted in a threat to use nuclear weapons.

The new strategy did not come out of the blue. Its conceptual underpinnings follow from Thomas Schelling's seminal books *The Strategy of Conflict* and *Arms and Influence*. At the operational level, the strategy borrows from 1960s-era US policy, which contemplated the limited use of nuclear weapons to oppose "creeping" Soviet aggression (as expressed, for example, in a 1963 document produced by the National Security Council, "The Management and Termination of War with the Soviet Union").

* Nikolai N. Sokov, a senior fellow at the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, previously worked at the Soviet and Russian Ministry.



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How and where? Common sense might suggest that any limited use of nuclear weapons for de-escalation purposes would involve non-strategic (shorter-range) weapons. But this does not appear to be the thinking. In 2003, the Ministry of Defense issued a white paper that dotted the new doctrine's i's and crossed its t's. The white paper emphasized, among other things, that because the United States could use its precision-guided conventional assets over significant distances, Russia needed the ability to deter the use of those assets with its own long-range capabilities.

Accordingly, simulations of the limited use of nuclear weapons have featured long-range nuclear-capable systems (long-range air-launched cruise missiles above all, but medium-range bombers as well). To the extent that one can determine the targets that have featured in these exercises, they seem to be located over much of the world—Europe, the Pacific, Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, and even the continental United States. Targets appear to include command and control centers as well as airbases and aircraft carriers from which US aircraft could fly missions against Russia. In other words, for limited-use options, Russia appears to target military assets rather than the population or economic centers that were typical targets under Cold War strategies.

It is important to note amid all this that Russia's nuclear weapons are assigned only to conflicts in which Russia is opposed by another nuclear weapon state. When Russia was preparing the 2010 edition of its military doctrine, some proposed that the possibility of using nuclear weapons be expanded to more limited conflicts, such as the 2008 war with Georgia—but this proposal was rejected. Ultimately the 2010 doctrine tightened conditions under which nuclear weapons could be used. Whereas the 2000 document allowed for their use "in situations critical to the national security" of Russia, the 2010 edition limited them to situations in which "the very existence of the state is under threat." (Otherwise, the nuclear component of military doctrine remained fundamentally unchanged from 2000.)

Lessons acknowledged? Nuclear weapons command attention and generate fear. But their utility is limited. Outside the most extreme circumstances, the damage they can inflict is simply too great and horrible for the threat of using them to be sufficiently credible. Furthermore, nuclear deterrence is fundamentally a defensive strategy—capable of deterring attack but incapable of supporting a proactive foreign policy. The United States, because of its conventional military power, is able to pursue a proactive foreign policy, and this has long been the envy of Russia's politicians and military leaders.

The 2000 version of Russia's military doctrine characterized the limited use of nuclear weapons as a stopgap measure to be relied on only until Russia could develop a more modern conventional strike capability, similar to that which the United States possessed. Russia's efforts to develop such a capability have been under way for more than a decade. Progress was slow at first due to chronic underfunding and the poor state of the Russian defense industry. The substandard performance of Russia's conventional forces during the 2008 war in Georgia led many to dismiss the idea that Russia would ever match the United States in conventional capabilities. But Moscow learned lessons from its Georgian experience, and modernization efforts have intensified in the last five years.

Today, Russia can boast of a new generation of long-range air- and sea-launched cruise missiles, as well as modern short-range ballistic and cruise missiles and precision-guided gravity bombs. Theoretically, the cruise missiles could carry nuclear warheads, but their envisioned role is primarily conventional. Additionally, Russia's GLONASS satellite constellation now enables precision targeting and communications across the globe. Russia has also begun developing a global strike capability, analogous to the US Prompt Global Strike initiative, in the form of a new intercontinental ballistic missile that the military has said is primarily intended to carry conventional warheads.

Military maneuvers conducted last year, known as West 2013, were apparently the first large-scale Russian exercises since 2000 that did not feature the simulated use of nuclear weapons. This hints that Moscow has gained more confidence in its conventional capabilities. As these capabilities continue to improve, Russia is likely to rely less on its nuclear weapons. But this shift will significantly alter the Eurasian security landscape.

If Russia becomes able to project military force in the same way that the United States has projected force in Kosovo, Iraq, and Libya, Moscow will likely become more assertive in its foreign policy. This will affect NATO policy in turn. The alliance, owing in large measure to US dominance in conventional military power, has been able in recent years to reduce (though not eliminate) its reliance on nuclear weapons. But if Russia begins to close the conventional weapons gap with the United States, some NATO countries might argue that nuclear deterrence should regain some of its former prominence. □

(Source: <http://thebulletin.org/why-russia-calls-limited-nuclear-strike-de-escalation>)



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What Others Say

How to Deal with Russia without Reigniting a Full-Fledged Cold War Psychology

By SAM NUNN | Co-Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, NTI & By GEORGE P. SHULTZ | Former U.S. Secretary of State

(March 28, 2014 | The Washington Post) - Russia has taken over Crimea and threatens further aggression. Now is the time to act but also to think strategically. What basic strategic approach should the United States and its allies take, and how can that approach be implemented over time so that the tactical moves benefit our long-term interests? Is it possible to avoid the reemergence of a full-fledged Cold War psychology, which is encouraged by Russia developing an "I can get away with it" mentality?

Thankfully, nuclear weapons are not part of today's conflict. Ukraine gave them up in 1994, partly in exchange for reassurance of its territorial integrity by the United States, Britain and Russia. Now, one of those "reassurers" has taken Crimea. What are the implications for proliferation? These are difficult questions, but we must describe the situation in realistic terms.

Perceptions are important. Whatever his long-range intent, Vladimir Putin has Russia's neighbors fearing and many Russians believing that he has, in effect, announced his objective to bring the former Soviet space once again under Russian influence, if not incorporated into the Russian state. He has stationed troops and other military assets in proximity and has indicated a willingness to use them. The resentment and fear his moves have created in Ukraine and other neighbors will, over time, set in motion countermoves and activities that will diminish Russia's own security. Putin has demonstrated his willingness to cut off supplies of the large quantity of oil and gas Russia ships to Ukraine and the countries of Western Europe and to play games with prices. Russia has also developed important trading and financial dealings with Western countries, particularly Germany, Britain and France.

But these assets are also potential liabilities. The Russian economy depends on these trading and financial arrangements and on income from oil and gas sales that are now taking place at historically high prices. Moreover, Russia has a demographic catastrophe looming in its low fertility and astonishingly low longevity rates for men, including men of working age. Many young Russians are emigrating. There is an open rebellion in the Caucasus. Russia shares a long border with China, with hardly anyone and large resources on one side and a lot of people on the other. Putin also has a restive population, as shown in an odd way by the arrest of members of the band Pussy Riot who sang songs of dissent on street corners.

Meanwhile, the United States and its European allies have considerable strength, particularly if exerted over time in a determined way. So what should our agenda be? The

United States and others with easy supply lines to Europe have increased capacity to generate oil and gas. The United States should speed up exports of oil and gas and encourage the development of these resources in other countries. The attraction of more representative government and less corrupt and open markets has underlying strength and appeal; Ukraine must be helped to move firmly into that world, based on improving economic prospects and honest and credible governance so that Ukrainians can make their own choices about political and economic relations. Financial markets could be the source of tremendous leverage if access to Russia is denied and the ruble starts to lose value. Unlike Soviet interventions during the Cold War, the recent aggression will affect Russian markets, investments and the Russian people's standard of living. The United States and our European allies must ensure that our military capacity is strengthened and our commitment to Article 5 of the NATO Treaty is unquestioned and enhanced. It is essential that European allies get serious about their defense capabilities.

The world works better when governments have a representative quality, when the corrupt brand of excessive bureaucracy is lessened, and when economies are open to imports and exports in competitive markets. Recent history has shown the damage done to global security and the economic commons by cross-border threats and the uncertainty that emanates from them. As far as Russia is concerned, the world is best served when Russia proceeds as a respected and important player on the world stage. Russia has huge resources, outstanding music, art, literature and science, among other attributes, and can be a positive force when it keeps its commitments and respects international law.

A key to ending the Cold War was the Reagan administration's rejection of the concept of linkage, which said that bad behavior by Moscow in one sphere had to lead to a freeze of cooperation in all spheres. Linkage had led to the United States being unable to advance its national interests in areas such as human rights and curbing the arms race. □

Read more at:

<http://www.nti.org/analysis/opinions/how-deal-russia-without-reigniting-full-fledged-cold-war-psychology/>



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Civil Society Perspective

What If Ukraine Still Had Nuclear Weapons?

By JOHN LORETZ

(March 25, 2014) Last week, the Wall Street Journal published a fallacious (and irresponsible) editorial, in which it claimed that “[o]ne lesson to the world of Russia’s cost-free carve-up of Ukraine is that nations that abandon their nuclear arsenals do so at their own peril.” While not exactly claiming that rampant global proliferation would make the world a more secure place, the idea that certain countries depend for their security upon either their own or someone else’s ability to annihilate the world is presented without a hint of irony.

The only way in which the conflict between Ukraine and Russia would be different had Ukraine kept possession of the nuclear weapons on its soil after the collapse of the Soviet Union, is that two nuclear-armed states would now be testing each other’s willingness to do the unthinkable in the midst of political crisis. The claim that deterrence works and that, therefore, Ukraine would be more secure with nuclear weapons is unsupportable on its face. First, there is no proof that deterrence works or ever has worked, only that it has not yet failed (read Ward Wilson’s book for the whole explanation). Anyone who believes that deterrence cannot fail—that it will work 100 percent of the time—is living in a fantasy world. One need only recall the Cuban missile crisis, where plain dumb luck had far more to do with averting catastrophe than any rational decision making (of which there was precious little).

If more States acquire nuclear weapons, we will simply come closer to the day when deterrence fails and nuclear weapons are used. Most countries came to this unavoidable conclusion decades ago, which is why we have the Non-Proliferation Treaty and are so anxious to maintain its integrity until we can rid the world of nuclear weapons entirely. Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan understood this in the 1990s, and made the right decision for that time and for all time.

The recent humanitarian initiative emerging from the Oslo and Nayarit conferences is based on the evidence that nuclear weapons themselves are the problem, regardless of who possesses them, and that the only sure way to prevent their use is to delegitimize and eliminate them. The humanitarian perspective—seeing nuclear weapons for

what they are and what they do—trumps all claims for their political utility, which always boils down to a gamble that threatening to use them will cause an adversary to back down. In the current crisis, that really would be a game of Russian roulette that no one should be playing.

Let’s assume, for the sake of argument, that Ukraine had kept the 1,500 strategic nuclear weapons that remained behind when the Soviet Union broke apart. Would that have made the long-standing differences in the region any less problematic? Would Russia be any less inclined to flex its muscles in a region where it has major political and economic roots and ambitions? Would Ukraine’s evolving relationship with Europe—particularly the NATO States—have been any less complicated or provocative to Russia? No, no, and no. What we would have are two nuclear-armed States, one of which—probably Ukraine—would now have to decide where the red line is that would force a decision on whether to use those weapons. As that point was reached, one of two things would happen. Either Ukraine would decide not to use nuclear weapons regardless of any Russian intervention, meaning they had been useless as instruments of security all along; or they would use them, with intolerable consequences for themselves, for millions of Russians, and for the rest of the world.

The inevitability of those consequences—not security—is what comes with the possession of nuclear weapons, and that’s why we can’t waste another day in starting a process to ban and eliminate them. That process would move a lot faster if we would disabuse ourselves of the notion that deterrence is anything more than a foolhardy gamble with the highest possible stakes. □

(Source: <http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2014/03/25/what-if-ukraine/>)

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By MICHELLE TULLO

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By THALIF DEEN

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Nuclear Abolition News | IPS
By THALIF DEEN

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As they trade charges against each other, the world's two major nuclear powers have intensified their bickering – specifically on the eve of a key Preparatory Committee (PrepCoM) meeting on a treaty to stop the proliferation of these weapons of mass destruction (WMD). [P] [ARABIC](#) | [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#)

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Publisher: Global Cooperation Council [umbrella organisation of IPS-Inter Press Service Deutschland] SGI-IPS Project Director: Katsuhiko Asagiri | President IPS Japan

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