

BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

2015 IS CRUCIAL FOR A NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE WORLD

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION | WITH MAY 2015 ARTICLES

In-Depth Reports

Nuclear Weapons Free World No Lost Cause



BERLIN | NEW YORK – The forthcoming 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August is an appropriate occasion to start developing a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons. This, according to experts, is the distinct message emerging from the four-week long United Nations conference, which ended without an outcome document on May 22. ➔ Pages 2-3-4

Nuclear Cataclysm, Warn Activists

UNITED NATIONS - After nearly four weeks of negotiations, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference ended in a predictable outcome: a text overwhelmingly reflecting the views and interests of the nuclear-armed states and some of their nuclear-dependent allies. ➔ Pages 4-5-6-7

Universalisation and Strengthening Nuke Treaty Review Need to be Qualitative

By AMBASSADOR A. L. A. AZEEZ | Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka in Vienna

“Strengthening the Review Process” and “Universalisation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty” (NPT) are distinctly substantive issues, that require consideration with their specificities in view. Nevertheless, there are a few aspects pertaining to the themes, which undoubtedly make them inter-related. They should not be lost sight of, as the NPT Review Conference, which concludes its month long session Friday, moves along its agenda. ➔ Pages 8-9-10

Nuclear Disarmament a Non-Starter



Interview with Dr Jennifer Allen Simons, Founder and President of the Simons Foundation, dedicated to the elimination of nuclear weapons

UNITED NATIONS - Albert Einstein, the internationally-renowned physicist who developed the theory of relativity, once famously remarked: “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.” Perhaps Einstein visualised a nuclear annihilation in the next world war, with disastrous consequences in its after-math: humanity going back to the Stone Age. According to most peace activists, the move to eliminate nuclear weapons is not gaining traction, with no hopeful

signs of an ideal world without deadly weapons of mass destruction. ➔ Pages 10-11

Faith-Based Organisations Warn of Impending Nuclear Disaster

UNITED NATIONS - As the month-long review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) continued into its second week, a coalition of some 50 faith-based organisations (FBOs), anti-nuclear peace activists and civil society organisations (CSOs) was assigned an unenviable task: a brief three-minute presentation warning the world of the disastrous humanitarian consequences of a nuclear attack. ➔ Pages 12-13-14

What Others Say

Opinion: A Critical Moment to Fortify Nuclear Test Ban

By LASSINA ZERBO | CTBTO Executive Secretary

VIENNA - The 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference wrapped up last week in New York without agreeing on an outcome document. While this is unfortunate, it is important to remember that the future of the nuclear non-proliferation regime will be determined by more than whether the Review Conference participants produced a document addressing all that currently ails the NPT-based regime. . ➔ Pages 15-16-17

How to Defuse the Devices of the Nuclear-armed States ➔ Pages 17-18-19

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Nuclear Weapons Free World No Lost Cause

By JAMSHED BARUAH

BERLIN | NEW YORK (IDN) – The forthcoming 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August is an appropriate occasion to start developing a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons. This, according to experts, is the distinct message emerging from the four-week long United Nations conference, which ended without an outcome document on May 22.



The failure of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to reach consensus on a substantive outcome has prompted the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to [express](#) his “disappointment”, which is widely shared.

But the conference had two positive outcomes: the Humanitarian Pledge, initiated by Austria, representing a commitment of more than 100 states to work for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons; and recognition of the crucial role of the Vienna-based Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization ([CTBTO](#)) in facilitating steps towards a nuclear weapons free world.

The conference failed not only – as the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada claimed – because of the lack of agreement over the Middle East. Also the draft outcome document was generally considered deeply flawed on disarmament.

In a statement, the Secretary-General’s spokesperson said on May 23 that Ban regretted “in particular that

States parties were unable to narrow their differences on the future of nuclear disarmament or to arrive at a new collective vision on how to achieve a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction”.

At the same time, Ban appealed to all States to sustain the momentum they had built over the previous five years. These included new initiatives in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and continuing efforts to strengthen nuclear non-proliferation.

“With respect to the Middle East, the Secretary-General continues to stand ready to support efforts to promote and sustain the inclusive regional dialogue necessary to achieve this goal,” Ban’s spokesperson said.

In how far this offer would be helpful, remains to be seen. Rose Gottemoeller, the U.S. Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, has described as “[unrealistic and unworkable](#)” the demand from Egypt to set a deadline for the convening of a conference on a zone in the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction – a conference the last NPT review in 2010 had stipulated must take place by 2012.

Ban hopes that the growing awareness of the devastating humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons would continue to compel urgent actions for effective measures leading to the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. The Secretary-General’s remarks address the basic issues at the heart of disagreement in the NPT review conference from April 27 to May 22 in New York – and this in spite of the fact that the NPT, which entered into force in 1970 and to which meanwhile 191 states have subscribed, is regarded the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. ☞

Photo: NPT Review Conference | Credit: CTBTO

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The treaty covers three mutually reinforcing pillars – disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy – and is the basis for international cooperation on stopping the spread of nuclear weapons. However, the official nuclear weapon states – Britain, France, Russia, China and USA – are faulted for not doing enough for nuclear disarmament.

Roll back

According to [Elizabeth Minor's analysis in 'Open Democracy'](#), the draft document contained no meaningful commitments by the nuclear-armed states and their allies. It set out few clear activities and no deadlines.

“Indeed, in many areas it rolled back on disarmament promises made in 2010 – such as diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, excised from the draft. It also suggested that work on nuclear disarmament at the UN General Assembly be done by consensus, even though that forum has always operated through democratic voting procedures,” argues Minor.

“Overall, the draft strongly reflected the priorities of the NPT's five officially nuclear-armed states (United Kingdom, France, Russia, China, USA) and their nuclear allies, in favour of upholding a status quo which features [little activity](#) on disarmament on the one hand and the [modernisation of nuclear arsenals](#) on the other,” adds Minor.

The [Federation of American Scientists](#) says: “More than two decades after the Cold War ended, the world's combined inventory of nuclear warheads remains at a very high level: approximately 15,700. Of these, around 4,100 warheads are considered operational, of which about 1,800 U.S. and Russian warheads are on high alert, ready for use on short notice.”

Most warheads are many times more powerful than the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in 1945. A single nuclear warhead, if detonated on a large city, could kill millions of people, with the effects persisting for decades, experts say.

“Despite significant reductions in U.S., Russian, French and British nuclear forces compared with Cold War levels, all the nuclear weapon states continue to modernize their remaining nuclear forces and appear com-

mitted to retaining nuclear weapons for the indefinite future,” says FAS.

[According to Stephen Young](#), a senior analyst at Union of Concerned Scientists, Obama administration plans to rebuild the entire U.S. nuclear arsenal, including the warheads, and the missiles, planes and submarines that carry them. These plans will cost \$348 billion over the next 10 years, according to a Congressional Budget Office estimate beginning of 2015. The National Defense Panel, appointed by Congress, found that the price tag over 30 years could be as much as a \$1 trillion.

While the U.S. blamed Egypt, others from the Middle East expressed anger that the interests of Israel, a nuclear-armed state outside the NPT, had been prioritized over the interests of NPT member states. “Their criticisms seemed to be borne out when Israel's Prime Minister Netanyahu reportedly thanked the U.S., UK and Canadian governments for ['blocking an Egyptian-led drive on a possible Middle East nuclear arms ban'](#),” writes [Rebecca Johnson](#).

Anti-democratic and non-transparent

According to [Reaching Critical Will \(RCW\)](#), “The process to develop the draft Review Conference outcome document was anti-democratic and non-transparent. Several delegations, including ASEAN, expressed their sense of frustration with and exclusion from the process . . . South Africa lambasted the NPT for denigrating into rule of the minority, where the few have control even when it doesn't make sense.”

RCW points out that, as a large, cross-regional group of 47 states argued in a statement delivered by Austria, the discussions during the Conference and resulting text demonstrated the “urgency to act upon the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons,” but then fell “dramatically short of making credible progress on filling the legal gap.”

107 states – the majority of the world's countries (and of NPT states parties) – have highlighted this legal gap and have committed to fill it, by endorsing the Humanitarian Pledge issued by Austria. These states have collectively demonstrated their empowerment by demanding that their security concerns be considered equal to those of the nuclear-armed states. ☹

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RCW, headed by Ray Acheson, is of the view that these states – and those that endorse the pledge after this Conference – must now use the pledge as the basis for a new process to develop a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons.

“This process should begin without delay. The 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has already been identified as the appropriate milestone for this process to commence.”

Observers agree with Acheson that a treaty banning nuclear weapons remains the most feasible course of action for states committed to disarmament. “This Review Conference has demonstrated beyond any doubt that continuing to rely on the nuclear-armed states or their nuclear-dependent allies for leadership or action is futile.” As the 47 states represented in the Austrian statement highlighted, “The exchanges of views that we

have witnessed during this review cycle demonstrate that there is a wide divide that presents itself in many fundamental aspects of what nuclear disarmament should mean. There is a reality gap, a credibility gap, a confidence gap and a moral gap.”

These gaps can be filled by determined action to stigmatise, prohibit, and eliminate nuclear weapons. “History honours only the brave,” declared Costa Rica. “Now is the time to work for what is to come, the world we want and deserve.”

RCW argues: “Those who reject nuclear weapons must have the courage of their convictions to move ahead without the nuclear-armed states, to take back ground from the violent few who purport to run the world, and build a new reality of human security and global justice.” [IDN-InDepthNews – 29 May 2015] ◆

Nuclear Cataclysm, Warn Activists

By THALIF DEEN

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - After nearly four weeks of negotiations, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference ended in a predictable outcome: a text overwhelmingly reflecting the views and interests of the nuclear-armed states and some of their nuclear-dependent allies.

“The process to develop the draft Review Conference outcome document was anti-democratic and nontransparent,” Ray Acheson, director, Reaching Critical Will, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), told IPS.

She said it contained no meaningful progress on nuclear disarmament and even rolled back some previous commitments.

But, according to several diplomats, there was one country that emerged victorious: Israel, the only nuclear-armed Middle Eastern nation, which has never fully supported a long outstanding proposal for an international conference for a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

As the Review Conference dragged towards midnight Friday, there were three countries – the United States, UK, and Canada (whose current government has been

described as “more pro-Israel than Israel itself”) – that said they cannot accept the draft agreement, contained in the Final Document, on convening of the proposed conference by March 1, 2016.

As Acheson put it: “It is perhaps ironic, then, that three of these states prevented the adoption of this outcome document on behalf of Israel, a country with nuclear weapons, that is not even party to the NPT.”

The Review Conference president’s claim that the NPT belongs to all its states parties has never rung more hollow, she added.

Joseph Gerson, disarmament coordinator at the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) told IPS the United States was primarily responsible, as in the 2005 review conference, for the failure of this year’s critically important NPT Review Conference. ➡

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Photo: United States Secretary of State John Kerry addresses the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) on April 27. The United States, along with the UK, and Canada, rejected the draft agreement. Credit: UN Photo/Loey Felipe

“The United States and Israel, that is, even if Israel is one of the very few nations that has yet to sign onto the NPT,” he pointed out.

Rather than blame Israel, he said, the U.S., Britain and Canada are blaming the victim, charging that Egypt wrecked the conference with its demands that the Review Conference’s final declaration reiterate the call for creation of a Middle East Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone.

But, the tail was once again wagging the dog, said Gerson, who is also the AFSC’s director of Peace and Economic Security Programme.

He said that Reuters news agency reported on Thursday, the day prior to the conclusion of the NPT Review Conference, that the United States sent “a senior U.S. official” to Israel “to discuss the possibility of a compromise” on the draft text of the Review Conference’s final document.

“Israeli apparently refused, and (U.S. President) Barack Obama’s ostensible commitments to a nuclear weapons-free world melted in the face of Israeli intransigence,” said Gerson. ➡

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John Burroughs, executive director of the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, told IPS the problem with NPT Review Conference commitments on disarmament made over the last 20 years is not so much that they have not been strong enough. Rather the problem is that they have not been implemented by the NPT nuclear weapon states.

Coming into the 2015 Review Conference, he said, many non-nuclear weapon states were focused on mechanisms and processes to ensure implementation.

In this vein, the draft, but not adopted Final Document, recommended that the General Assembly establish an open-ended working group to “identify and elaborate” effective disarmament measures, including legal agreements for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear weapons free world.

Regardless of the lack of an NPT outcome, this initiative can and should be pushed at the next General Assembly session on disarmament and international security, this coming fall, said Burroughs, who is also executive director of the U.N. Office of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA).

Acheson told IPS that 107 states— the majority of the world’s countries (and of NPT states parties)—have endorsed a Humanitarian Pledge, committing to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

The outcome from the 2015 NPT Review Conference is the Humanitarian Pledge, she added.

The states endorsing the Pledge now and after this Conference must use it as the basis for a new process to develop a legally-binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons.

“This process should begin without delay, even without the participation of the nuclear-armed states. The 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki has already been identified as the appropriate milestone for this process to commence.”

Acheson also said a treaty banning nuclear weapons remains the most feasible course of action for states committed to disarmament.

“This Review Conference has demonstrated beyond any doubt that continuing to rely on the nuclear-armed states or their nuclear-dependent allies for leadership or action is futile,” she said.

This context requires determined action to stigmatise, prohibit, and eliminate nuclear weapons.

“Those who reject nuclear weapons must have the courage of their convictions to move ahead without the nuclear-armed states, to take back ground from the violent few who purport to run the world, and build a new reality of human security and global justice,” Acheson declared.

Gerson told IPS the greater tragedy is that the failure of the Review Conference further undermines the credibility of the NPT, increasing the dangers of nuclear weapons proliferation and doing nothing to stanch new nuclear arms races as the nuclear powers “modernize” their nuclear arsenals and delivery systems for the 21st century continues apace.

He said the failure of the Review Conference increases the dangers of nuclear catastrophe and the likelihood of nuclear winter.

The U.S. veto illustrates the central importance of breaking the silos of single issue popular movements if the people’s power needed to move governments – especially the United States – is to be built.

Had there been more unity between the U.S. nuclear disarmament movement and forces pressing for a just Israeli-Palestinian peace in recent decades, the outcome of the Review Conference could have been different, noted Gerson. ➡

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“If we are to prevail, nuclear disarmament movements must make common cause with movements for peace, justice and environmental sustainability.”

Despite commitments made in 1995, when the NPT was indefinitely extended and in subsequent Review Conferences, and reiterated in the 2000 and 2010 Review Conference final documents to work for a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East, Obama was unwilling to say “No” to Israel and “Yes” to an important step to reducing the dangers of nuclear war, said Gerson.

“As we have been reminded by the Conferences on the Human Consequences of Nuclear War held in Norway, Mexico and Austria, between the nuclear threats made by all of the nuclear powers and their histories of nuclear weapons accidents and miscalculations, that we are alive today is more a function of luck than of policy decisions.”

The failure of Review Conference is thus much more than a lost opportunity, it brings us closer to nuclear cataclysms, he declared.

Burroughs told IPS debate in the Review Conference revealed deep divisions over whether the nuclear weapon states have met their commitments to de-alert, reduce, and eliminate their arsenals and whether modernisation of nuclear arsenals is compatible with achieving disarmament.

The nuclear weapon states stonewalled on these matters.

If the nuclear weapons states displayed a business as usual attitude, the approach of non-nuclear weapon states was characterised by a sense of urgency, illustrated by the fact that by the end of the Conference over 100 states had signed the “Humanitarian Pledge” put forward by Austria.

It commits signatories to efforts to “stigmatize, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in light of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences”. (IPS | 23 May 2015) ◆

JAPANESE

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/478-failure-of-review-conference-brings-world-close-to-nuclear-cataclysm-warn-activists-japanese>

活動家が警告 「NPT運用検討会議決裂で世界は核の大惨事に近づいた」

【国連IPS = タリフ・デーーン】

核不拡散条約（NPT）運用検討会議は、4週間の協議を経て、予想された結果に終わった。すなわち、会議終盤に議長が各国に提示した最終文書草案の内容は、核保有国と核兵器に依存するその同盟国の見方や利益をおおよそ反映したものだつた。

[婦人国際平和自由連盟（WILPF）](#) のプロジェクト「[リーチング・クリティカル・ウィル](#)」

のレイ・アチソン氏はIPSの取材に対して、「NPT運用検討会議の成果文書を策定するプロセスは、反民主的で不透明なものでした。」と指摘したうえで、

「最終文書の草案には、核軍縮を前進させるような意味ある措置がなかつたばかりでなく、従来からの約束を後退させるものでもありました。」と語つた。

一方で一部の外交筋によれば、今回の会議で勝利を収めた国がひとつあつたという - イスラエルである。イスラエルは、[中東唯一の核保有国](#)であり、長らく提案されている「[中東非核・非大量破壊兵器地帯の創設に関する国際会議](#)」の開催を拒絶しつづけている国でもある。

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In-Depth Reports

Universalisation and Strengthening Nuke Treaty Review Need to be Qualitative

By AMBASSADOR A. L. A. AZEEZ | Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka in Vienna



Photo: A view of the General Assembly Hall as Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson (shown on screens) addresses the opening of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Review Conference is taking place at UN headquarters from 27 April to 22 May 2015.

Credit: UN Photo/Loey Felipe

NEW YORK (IPS) - “Strengthening the Review Process” and “Universalisation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty” (NPT) are distinctly substantive issues, that require consideration with their specificities in view. Nevertheless, there are a few aspects pertaining to the themes, which undoubtedly make them inter-related. They should not be lost sight of, as the NPT Review Conference, which concludes its month long session Friday, moves along its agenda.

The five-yearly review process has been effectively reduced to one of stock-taking - of unmet timelines, benchmarks and undertakings. The issue of strengthening the review process arose pursuant to, and as part of, the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. It remains on the agenda of each Main Committee of the NPT Review Conference since then. ➡

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In-Depth Reports

While a special feature of the 1995 process is its important adjunct, the indefinite extension of the Treaty, a specific expectation of the outcome of that process was strengthening of the three pillars of the Treaty.

This was sought to be achieved in such a way that the implementation of the three pillars would be consummate and mutually reinforcing.

One should not be oblivious, however, to what provided the immediate context for indefinite extension. It was the expectation that those countries, which retained their nuclear weapons under the Treaty, would take practical measures towards the elimination of nuclear arsenals.

It was noted then, with concern, that expected measures towards the elimination of nuclear arsenals had floundered within the 25 years preceding the 1995 review and extension process.

Underpinning this standpoint was the commitment by nuclear weapon states that they would pursue disarmament as a matter of priority and without delay.

This is reflected in the outcomes of the review conferences, particularly that of the 2010 Review Conference, where a clear commitment was made, that disarmament would be taken forward in 'good faith' and 'at an early date'.

Nevertheless, those who possess nuclear arsenals have not lived up to the commitments.

The 'forward looking' thrust of the process, which was originally intended to inspire positive action, has sadly, due to overwhelming convergence of strategic interests, or other reasons, become an exercise of reinventing the wheel.

What is now required is to clearly state timelines and verification and other measures in any plan of action to be adopted.

There has been no progress in nuclear disarmament. Nuclear non-proliferation has made only a little headway in a few regions. The impact on 'peaceful uses', of restrictive and control measures, is all too apparent. They often appear to border on denial of technology.

The total lack of progress in the field of nuclear disarmament as against corresponding increase in restrictive or control measures in the area of 'peaceful uses', with nuclear non-proliferation swinging in-between, presents a spectre of regression for all humanity.

It seems to be reinforcing the view among countries, which look to 'peaceful uses' as a component in their national energy policies, or development strategies, that leaving aside the treaty construct of 'three pillars', playing field is not level, and will not be, in the foreseeable future.

In diplomacy, the emphasis always is on staying positive. As the review process is in its last week, the call for it is growing stronger.

But can one conceivably do so in the current scenario, which appears fraught with far too many challenges in area of nuclear disarmament with its inter-relationship to the other two pillars of NPT? Is cautious optimism in order?

A measure of pessimism has already set in, and has the potential to become irreversibly dominant. It would be so, unless and until there is an urgent re-summoning of necessary political will to achieve a radical change in our mindsets as well as in our policies and programmes.

Universalisation of the Treaty is an objective that needs to be continuously promoted. But behind what has led to this call remains its indefinite extension that was achieved in 1995.

If there had been no agreement on extension in 1995, there would be no treaty left behind today. The goal of strengthening the review process must therefore inspire, and be inspired by, the goal of universalisation.

The logic that led to the extension of the Treaty needs to bear on the call for its universalisation, both as part of, and pursuant to, review process. A strengthened review process would thus contribute a great deal towards realising this intended outcome. The goal of universalisation, however, needs to be advanced with a time span in view, and above all, it needs to be qualitative. ☺

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In-Depth Reports

What does all this mean?

We should no doubt count on and increase the number of adherences, but equally, we should also emphasise the overall importance of integrating, without discrimination inter se, all the provisions of the Treaty. National policies and programmes of State parties need to reflect these thereby enabling the advancement of its three pillars.

The review process should strengthen efforts to achieve this twin goal. (IPS | 19 May 2015)

Nuclear Disarmament a Non-Starter

By THALIF DEEN interviews Dr Jennifer Allen Simons, Founder and President of the Simons Foundation, dedicated to the elimination of nuclear weapons



UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - Albert Einstein, the internationally-renowned physicist who developed the theory of relativity, once famously remarked: “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.”

Perhaps Einstein visualised a nuclear annihilation in the next world war, with disastrous consequences in its aftermath: humanity going back to the Stone Age.

According to most peace activists, the move to eliminate nuclear weapons is not gaining traction, with no hopeful signs of an ideal world without deadly weapons of mass destruction.

Over the last few decades, the five major nuclear powers – the United States, Britain, France, Russia and China – have been joined by four more: India, Pakistan, Israel, and North Korea.

And if Iran goes nuclear – even later than sooner – Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Turkey are likely to follow in its footsteps.

The most frightening worst-case scenario is the new Cold War between the United States and Russia, triggered primarily by the political crisis in Ukraine and Russian annexation of Crimea.

A proposal on the sidelines of a month-long review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which concludes next week, is to begin negotiations on a proposed international convention to eliminate all nuclear weapons worldwide.

Asked if the proposal will be a reality, Dr. Jennifer Allen Simons, founder and president of the Simons Foundation, a relentless advocate of nuclear disarmament, bluntly told IPS: “I think it is a non-starter,” but added: “I would love to be proven wrong.” She pointed out that nuclear weapons states (NWS) are offering the same old rhetoric while upgrading their arsenals and planning for a long future with nuclear weapons.

“The most that may happen is consensus on lowering the operational status of nuclear weapons,” said Dr Simons, who was an adviser to the Canadian government delegation to the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the 2002 NPT Prepcom. ➡

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In-Depth Reports

“The most that may happen is consensus on lowering the operational status of nuclear weapons,” said Dr Simons, who was an adviser to the Canadian government delegation to the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the 2002 NPT Prepcom.

The global zero commission report on de-alerting has been well received, said Dr Simons, who was at the United Nations last week for the NPT Review Conference, and whose foundation, established to eliminate nuclear weapons, is commemorating its 30th anniversary this year.

Excerpts from the interview follow.

Q: Judging by the current NPT negotiations, do you think the Review Conference will succeed in adopting an outcome document, by consensus, by May 22?

A: Though it is too early to tell, so far it seems likely they will get a consensus document, and if so, it will not contain the convention/ban, humanitarian impact issues. I heard that several delegations are prepared to push for disarmament convention/ban or framework of agreements through the open-ended working group if NPT consensus on this issue fails.

Q: Will the new Cold War between the U.S. and Russia have an impact on the outcome of the Review Conference?

A: It may not have an impact because the NWS are not going to eliminate their arsenals. The new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) is on track with reductions, but I do not believe we will see another bilateral commitment for further reductions.

Q: What, in your view, are the major obstacles for total nuclear disarmament?

A: The major obstacle may be fear! Lack of trust between Russia and the West, lack of trust that the over 30 nuclear-capable states may move forward to nuclear weapon capability. My greatest fear is that the catalyst to elimination will be the detonation of a nuclear weapon, by accident, miscalculation, design or a successful cyberattack will trigger the highly automated system or a spoofed attack.

While the U.S. feels its system is impenetrable, however a recent report from the U.S. Defence Science Board warned that the vulnerability of the U.S. command and control system had never been fully assessed. It is not known whether Russia’s and China’s systems are vulnerable. It also cannot be assumed that India’s and Pakistan’s systems are invulnerable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s flaunting of Russia’s nuclear option is worrying and an obstacle to changing the political salience of nuclear weapons and also provides the other NWS states with a rationale for retaining and upgrading their weapons.

Q: Will we ever see nuclear disarmament in our lifetime or perhaps within the next 50 years?

A: It could happen within my lifetime — and probably only if there was a detonation. This would be such a tragic event and a crime against humanity that it would prompt a ban.

The irony of all this is that everyone is afraid to use them, the military don’t like them not only because of committing war crimes, crimes against humanity, but worse, they cost so much to maintain and the military would rather have the money for other weapons.

Frankly, I will never understand why people want to kill. (IPS | 11 May 2015) ◆

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NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION | WITH MAY 2015 ARTICLES

In-Depth Reports

Faith-Based Organisations Warn of Impending Nuclear Disaster

By THALIF DEEN



Photo: Dr. Emily Welty from WCC delivers the interfaith joint statement at the NPT Review Conference.
Credit: Kimiaki Kawai | SGI

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - As the month-long review conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) continued into its second week, a coalition of some 50 faith-based organisations (FBOs), anti-nuclear peace activists and civil society organisations (CSOs) was assigned an unenviable task: a brief three-minute presentation warning the world of the disastrous humanitarian consequences of a nuclear attack.

Accomplishing this feat within a rigid time frame, Dr. Emily Welty of the World Council of Churches (WCC) did not mince her words. Speaking on behalf of the coalition, she told delegates: “We raise our voices in the name of sanity and the shared values of humanity. We reject the immorality of holding whole populations hostage, threatened with a cruel and miserable death.”
☞

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Speaking on behalf of the coalition, she told delegates: “We raise our voices in the name of sanity and the shared values of humanity. We reject the immorality of holding whole populations hostage, threatened with a cruel and miserable death.”

And she urged the world’s political leaders to muster the courage needed to break the deepening spirals of mistrust that undermine the viability of human societies and threaten humanity’s shared future.

She said nuclear weapons are incompatible with the values upheld by respective religious traditions – the right of people to live in security and dignity; the commands of conscience and justice; the duty to protect the vulnerable and to exercise the stewardship that will safeguard the planet for future generations.

“Nuclear weapons manifest a total disregard for all these values and commitments,” she declared, warning there is no countervailing imperative – whether of national security, stability in international power relations, or the difficulty of overcoming political inertia – that justifies their continued existence, much less their use.

Led by Peter Prove, director, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, World Council of Churches, Susi Snyder, Nuclear Disarmament Programme Manager PAX and Hirotsugu Terasaki, executive director of Peace Affairs, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the coalition also included Global Security Institute, Islamic Society of North America, United Church of Christ, Buddhist Peace Fellowship, Pax Christi USA and United Religions Initiative.

SGI, one of the relentless advocates of nuclear disarmament, was involved in three international conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons (in Oslo, Norway in March 2013; Nayarit, Mexico in February 2014; and Vienna, Austria, December 2014), and also participated in two inter-faith dialogues on nuclear disarmament (in Washington DC, and Vienna over the last two years).

At both meetings, inter-faith leaders jointly called for the abolition of all nuclear weapons. The current NPT review conference, which began Apr. 27, is scheduled

to conclude May 22, perhaps with an “outcome document” – if it is adopted by consensus.

The review conference also marks the 70th anniversary of the U.S. nuclear attack on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II.

Since August 1945, when both cities were subjected to atomic attacks, Dr Welty told delegates, the continued existence of nuclear weapons has forced humankind to live in the shadow of apocalyptic destruction.

“Their use would not only destroy the past fruits of human civilization, it would disfigure the present and consign future generations to a grim fate.”

For decades, the coalition of FBOs said, the obligation and responsibility of all states to eliminate these weapons of mass destruction has been embodied in Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

But progress toward the fulfillment of this repeatedly affirmed commitment has been too slow – and today almost imperceptible.

Instead, ongoing modernisation programmes of the world’s nuclear arsenals is diverting vast resources from limited government budgets when public finances are hard-pressed to meet the needs of human security.

“This situation is unacceptable and cannot be permitted to continue,” the coalition said.

The London Economist pointed out recently that every nuclear power is spending “lavishly to upgrade its atomic arsenal.”

Russia’s defence budget has increased by over 50 percent since 2007, a third of it earmarked for nuclear weapons: twice the share of France.

China is investing in submarines and mobile missile batteries while the United States is seeking Congressional approval for 350 billion dollars for the modernisation of its nuclear arsenal.

The world’s five major nuclear powers are the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia – and the non-declared nuclear powers include India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. ➡

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In-Depth Reports

The coalition pledged to: communicate within respective faith communities the inhumane and immoral nature of nuclear weapons and the unacceptable risks they pose, working within and among respective faith traditions to raise awareness of the moral imperative to abolish nuclear weapons; and continue to support international efforts to ban nuclear weapons on humanitarian grounds and call for the early commencement of negotiations by states on a new legal instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons in a forum open to all states and blockable by none.

The coalition also called on the world's governments to: heed the voices of the world's hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) urging the abolition of nuclear weapons, whose suffering must never be visited on any other individual, family or society; take to heart the realities clarified by successive international conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons; take concrete action leading to the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, consistent with existing obligations under the NPT; and associate themselves with the pledge delivered at the Vienna Conference and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. (IPS | 7 May 2015) ◆

CHINESE

<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/index.php/japanese-chinese-korean/473-faith-based-organisations-warn-of-impending-nuclear-disaster-chinese>

宗教组织警告即将到来的核灾祸

【于联合国IPS = 塔里夫·迪恩】

为期一个月的核不扩散条约审查会议进入第二周之际，一个由50个宗教组织（FBO），反核和平运动者和民间社会组织（CSO）组成的联盟接受了一个并不值得羡慕的任务：就核武器对人类造成的毁灭性后果警告世界的3分钟简短演讲。

在如此严格的时间限制下，来自普世教会协会的艾米莉·韦尔蒂博士并没有简纲捷端。她代表整个联盟告诉与会者：“我们为人类的理性和共同价值发声。我们反对以一种残酷悲惨的死亡为威胁绑架全人类的不道德做法。”

她还督促世界政治领导人鼓起勇气，打破盘绕在我们周围的深层焦虑。这种焦虑足以破坏人类社会发展，威胁全人类共同的未来。

她说核武器与各宗教的传统格格不入。人类当有生存的尊严和保障，有良心和公平心，并有保护弱者并为子孙后代管理和保护好这个星球的义务。

“核武器是对所有这些价值和承诺的漠视。”她如此宣称并警告说无论是国家的安全，国际关系的稳定还是政治惯例的难以克服都不能解释核武依然存在重要性，更不要说使用这些核武器了。

由普世教会协会的教会对国际事务委员会委员长彼得·普鲁布、PAX和平组织的核裁军项目经理苏西·斯奈德以及国际创价协会和平运动局长寺崎广嗣共同带领，该联盟还包括全球安全学会、北美伊斯兰协会、联合基督教会、佛教和平联谊会、美国基督和平会和宗教联合倡议会。

国际创价协会一直坚持不懈的主张核裁军，其参与了三次关于核武器的人道主义影响的国际会议

（2013年3月于挪威奥斯陆；2014年2月于墨西哥纳亚里特；以及2014年12月于奥地利维也纳），并在过去两年内参加了在华盛顿和维也纳的两次跨

宗教的核裁军对话。在这两次会议中，各宗教领导共同呼吁废除全部核武器。

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NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION | WITH MAY 2015 ARTICLES

What Others Say

Opinion: A Critical Moment to Fortify Nuclear Test Ban

By LASSINA ZERBO | CTBTO Executive Secretary



Photo: Dr. Lassina Zerbo. Credit: UN Photo/Evan Schneider

VIENNA (IPS) - The 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference wrapped up last week in New York without agreeing on an outcome document. While this is unfortunate, it is important to remember that the future of the nuclear non-proliferation regime will be determined by more than whether the Review Conference participants produced a document addressing all that currently ails the NPT-based regime.

At the same time, all NPT Member States not only affirmed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as an effective non-proliferation and disarmament measure that complements and reinforces the NPT, they also identified a legally binding test ban as an urgent priority.

The total cessation of nuclear test explosions has been an objective of the international community since just after the dawn of the nuclear age. Negotiated after the end of the Cold War and amidst fresh optimism over prospects for nuclear disarmament, the CTBT prohibits explosive nuclear testing by anyone, anywhere, without exception. At the height of the Cold War, nearly 500 nuclear tests were carried out every decade. But since the CTBT opened for signature in 1996, only three countries have carried out nuclear tests. ➡

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What Others Say

In fact, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the only country in the world to have tested a nuclear device in more than 15 years. This is clear proof that the Treaty has been a resounding success in effectuating an end to nuclear testing.

The CTBT is not simply a handshake agreement between countries that they will promise to abide by the test ban. The Treaty is buttressed by a global network of over 300 monitoring stations constantly scanning the planet for signs of a nuclear explosion. For those with any doubt that the CTBT is internationally and effectively verifiable, at 90 percent complete, the Treaty's verification regime already provides a detection capability far better than what was thought to be attainable 20 years ago. We have succeeded in establishing the most sophisticated and extensive global verification regime ever conceived.

The determination to end nuclear testing has also played a decisive role in the NPT review process. The agreement to complete CTBT negotiations was one of the essential decisions that paved the way for the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995. In 2000, NPT States Parties identified the entry into force of the CTBT as the first of 13 practical disarmament steps.

While NPT members are fractured on how to resolve many of the problems eroding the non-proliferation regime, securing a legally binding test ban is an unequivocal priority for all countries considering the statements from over 100 individual countries, as well as from various groups.

For instance, the statement from the 117 members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) which are Party to the NPT – the largest group of countries – delivered by Iran, stressed the “significance of achieving the universal adherence to the CTBT and realizing its entry into force” and “strongly support[ed] a comprehensive ban on all forms of nuclear-weapon tests without exception, as well as any nuclear explosion, and reaffirm[ed] the importance of such a ban in the realization of objectives of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.”

The European Union (EU) Foreign Policy Chief (and member of the CTBT's Group of Eminent Persons) Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the 28 countries of the EU and nine other countries, confirmed that the “CTBT remains a top priority.”

The 14 members of the Caribbean Community affirmed, “the elimination of the testing of nuclear weapons remains a critical element in the overall process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation,” and urged the eight remaining States required to bring the Treaty into force to sign and/or ratify “immediately and unconditionally.”

In addition to the views of non-nuclear-weapon States, the five NPT-acknowledged nuclear weapon States also demonstrated their commitment to the CTBT in a joint statement which included “efforts to bring the CTBT into force at an early date.” They also reaffirmed their own moratoria on testing, called on other States to the same and confirmed the CTBT as an effective disarmament and non-proliferation measure.

It seems, then, that countries which failed to agree at the Review Conference do come together over the test-ban treaty. However, in light of last week's outcome, mere words of support without real action are both insufficient and dangerous.

Bringing the CTBT into force is the responsibility of all countries. CTBT State Signatories benefit daily from the CTBTO's monitoring assets which are at the disposal of the international community to support national security needs.

One advantage of the CTBT is its special mechanism for promoting its entry into force. For the seventh time, States Signatories (even those which have yet to ratify), intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organisations will convene this September to determine how to achieve this at the so-called Article XIV Conference in New York. ➡

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What Others Say

To ensure a robust and effective plan of action, I encourage all parties to consider the following: First, how to engage the remaining eight States required for the test ban to become legally binding so that they sign and/or ratify the CTBT; and second, what specific steps can current States Signatories take to advance the Treaty's entry into force.

Of equal importance are concrete proposals to complete the unique, robust and unparalleled international verification system, as well as ensuring sustainable resources to remain ahead of the curve in maintaining this essential international verification system that delivers security, scientific, environmental, and many other benefits to its Member States every day.

In a complex and constantly changing world, a legally-binding and verifiable prohibition on nuclear testing provides for a degree of stability, and encourages multilateral cooperation and confidence building towards an enhanced regional and international security environment. The CTBT is too important to let the rolling tides of history determine its fate.

The coming weeks and months are crucial for countries to coalesce around the foundational assets within the broader NPT regime, which is worth protecting and advancing. We are doing our part. We now look to the international community to step up to the plate and do their part. Together, we cannot afford to miss another opportunity. (IPS | 27 May 2015) ◆

How to Defuse the Devices of the Nuclear-armed States

By ELIZABETH MINOR*

The five-yearly review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty ended without any agreed commitments, unbalanced as ever between the nuclear-armed states and the rest. Time to change the agenda.

After four weeks of statements, deliberations and often bruising negotiations at the UN headquarters, the states party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) could not agree a plan for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to guide their work over the next five years.

The draft outcome was blocked on 22 May by the United States, with cover from Canada and the UK. The US blamed an "unrealistic and unworkable" demand from Egypt to set a deadline for the convening of a conference on a zone in the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction—a conference the last NPT review in 2010 had stipulated must take place by 2012.

By the end of the conference, what would have been the disarmament section of the outcome document was unacceptably weak. Its adoption would have dealt another blow to the credibility of the NPT as a vehicle for nuclear-disarmament efforts. The draft contained no meaningful commitments by the nuclear-armed states and their allies. It set out few clear activities and no deadlines.

Indeed, in many areas it rolled back on disarmament promises made in 2010—such as diminishing the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, excised from the draft. It also suggested that work on nuclear disarmament at the UN General Assembly be done by consensus, even though that forum has always operated through democratic voting procedures. ☹

**Elizabeth Minor is a researcher with Article 36, a UK-based NGO working to prevent the unintended, unnecessary or unacceptable harm caused by certain weapons.*

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What Others Say

Overall, the draft strongly reflected the priorities of the NPT's five officially nuclear-armed states and their nuclear allies, in favour of upholding a status quo which features little activity on disarmament on the one hand and the modernisation of nuclear arsenals on the other.

The conference president had said the NPT belonged equally to all its members but, amid a lack of consultation, backroom deals rather than negotiation and bullying behind closed doors at late-night sessions, it was no surprise the result did not reflect the concerns of most states. Indeed, some asserted that the draft, in particular the disarmament section, did not represent a negotiated document at all.

Skewed debate

A wider analysis of multilateral fora discussing nuclear disarmament shows that lower-income countries are less likely than richer ones to send representatives and, if they do, field smaller delegations who are less likely to speak. Many are in nuclear-weapons-free zones, whereas significant high-income countries are part of a nuclear alliance, which shows how the debate is skewed.

Some states expressed their frustration and sense of injustice at these dynamics in New York: South Africa compared the "sense that the NPT has degenerated into minority rule" to the conditions of apartheid. If it has not already become the case, the NPT is in danger of being perceived as a vehicle for the interests of nuclear-armed states, who are not seen to be upholding their end of the treaty's disarmament/non-proliferation bargain (they negotiate in good faith for disarmament; others do not join the nuclear club)—another instance of the failing global stewardship of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

Though the draft disarmament plan would have lacked impact and credibility if adopted, recent analysis has suggested that the reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons by NPT nuclear-armed states is entirely unaffected by whether an NPT review has any outcome. Against this background, it is clear something new is urgently needed.

Humanitarian focus

In fact, a new initiative is under way. At the 2010 NPT conference, parties expressed concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. Since then, momentum has been building around a humanitarian-focused reframing of the issue. This concentrates on the weapons themselves and their unacceptable impact on human beings and the environment, rather than on claims about their strategic and security functions.

Unlike the other weapons of mass destruction, there is no comprehensive, explicit prohibition on the possession, production, transfer and use of nuclear weapons.

At conferences hosted by Norway, Mexico and Austria, and within the academic and NGO communities, new evidence has been presented, with survivors of nuclear explosions providing powerful and crucial testimony. Increased concern from the great majority of states worldwide has been seen in forums including the NPT, where this year 159 states signed a joint statement on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

This led to the one substantive outcome of four weeks of discussion in New York. At the conclusion of the NPT review conference, 107 countries had endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge, which commits them to take action to "fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons".

It features a commitment to join other states, international organisations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society in efforts to "stigmatise, prohibit and eliminate" nuclear weapons, based on their unacceptable humanitarian consequences. Though it refers to the need for new legal measures to support NPT obligations to develop effective measures on disarmament, its implications go beyond the treaty. ➔

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NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION | WITH MAY 2015 ARTICLES

What Others Say

Treaty ban

Unlike the other weapons of mass destruction, there is no comprehensive, explicit prohibition on the possession, production, transfer and use of nuclear weapons. This is the most immediate ‘legal gap’, which needs filling, through a treaty banning nuclear weapons. This would be a logical next step from the humanitarian initiative and would represent an effective measure towards nuclear disarmament.

Even if the nuclear-armed states did not initially join, it would represent a clear normative assertion that nuclear weapons are inherently unacceptable and would have practical impacts, such as on the financing of nuclear-weapons modernisation. Unlike the NPT, where different roles are assigned to the nuclear-armed states and those without such weapons, it would not discriminate between states in their obligations.

To many states the humanitarian initiative has represented the coming of democracy to nuclear disarmament and a recognition of the priorities of the vast majority, which do not have nuclear weapons—Costa Rica expressed this strongly at the NPT review. It also threatens the hold of the nuclear-armed states over the agenda, suggesting that the object of urgent concern should be nuclear weapons’ human impact rather than the nuclear-armed states’ security theories.

The nuclear-armed NPT states thus engaged in desperate efforts to remove any reference to humanitarian consequences from the draft outcome. France even attempted to deny that any new evidence on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons had emerged or that there was any risk posed by their own nuclear weapons.

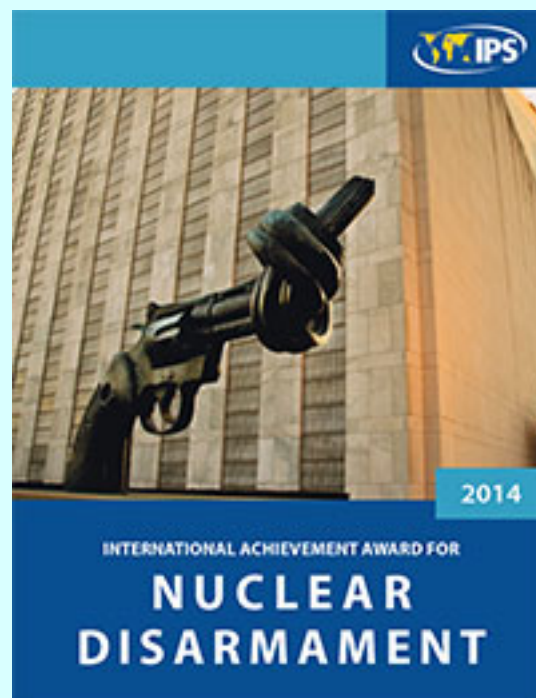
The 107 backers of the pledge must now take the momentum of the humanitarian initiative forward. The negotiation of any new legal instrument should be open to all states but unamenable to being blocked by any one. Consensus rules in multilateral forums do not necessarily ensure open inclusion: they can instead perpetuate the dominance of a small number of states on matters of pressing global concern.

This August marks the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is time for negotiations on a treaty banning such weapons to begin in earnest. (Open Security | 30 May 2015)

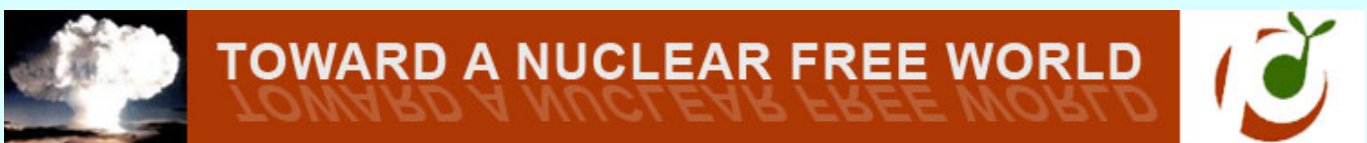
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