

# BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

## 2015 IS CRUCIAL FOR A NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE WORLD

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

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Ahead of a major international conference on September 29 at the UN headquarters in New York, pressure is mounting on the eight states whose backing is vital to the entering-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT): China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States. ➔ Pages 9-10-11-12

**Nuke Test Ban Treaty Still in Limbo, U.N. Complains** ➔ Pages 13-14



#### **Opinion: Campaign to End Nuclear Tests - Kazakhstan Launches ATOM E**

Despite United Nations General Assembly resolutions since 1946, calling for an end to lethal arsenal, the possession of nuclear weapons has continued to be a symbol of scientific sophistication or military power, until 29 August 1991, when Kazakhstan, upon gaining independence, closed its Nuclear Test Site in Semipalatinsk – the second largest in the world. ➔ Pages 15-16-17

#### **Opinion: Can Nuclear War be Avoided? by Gunnar Westberg**

The Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons had as members former leading politicians or military officers, among others a British Field Marshal, an American General, an American Secretary of Defence and a French Prime Minister. ➔ Pages 18-19

### What Others Say

#### **Opinion: Nuclear States Do Not Comply with the Non-Proliferation Treaty by Farhang Jahanpour**

Article Six of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) makes it obligatory for nuclear states to get rid of their nuclear weapons as part of a bargain that requires the non-nuclear states not to acquire nuclear weapons. Apart from the NPT provisions, there have been a number of other rulings that have reinforced those requirements. ➔ Pages 20-21

**Why China Should Worry about Pak by Vinod Saigha, Retired Major-General of the Indian Army** ➔ Pages 22-23

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## Kazakh and Japan Go ‘Aggressive’ for Entry into Force of Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

By Fabíola Ortiz



*A view of the ministerial meeting at the UN headquarters | Credit. Fabíola Ortiz*

UNITED NATIONS (IDN) - “We will be working very aggressively to achieve the goal of making the world nuclear free by 2045,” when the United Nations will mark its 100th birthday, declared Erlan Idrissov, Foreign Minister of the Central Asian Republic of Kazakhstan.

Idrissov was addressing the 9th Ministerial-level Conference on Facilitating the Entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) on September 29 at the United Nations headquarters in New York. He was co-chair with Japan’s Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida.

The Kazakh Foreign Minister warned delegates he would be “blunt, even undiplomatic” in pushing for a legally binding nuclear test-ban. “Our countries (Kazakh and Japan) have the moral right to be aggressive about abolishing nuclear weapons.”

Co-chair Kishida highlighted Japan’s historical role and obligation to work with the international community to ban nuclear tests and nuclear weapons, making particular reference to this year’s 70th anniversaries of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the experience of nuclear-bomb survivors, the Hibakusha.

The Conference was attended by a large number of Foreign Ministers from ratifying states, as well as Members of the Group of Eminent Persons (GEM), including the EU High Representative Federica Mogherini, former UK Secretary of State for Defence Lord Desmond Browne, Commissioner of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission ☞

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Ambassador Nobuyasu Abe, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Angela Kane, and CTBTO Executive Secretary Emeritus Wolfgang Hoffmann.

The Conference, also known as the Article XIV Conference in accordance with the relevant Treaty article, adopted a Final Declaration, which affirms “that a universal and effectively verifiable Treaty constitutes a fundamental instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.” Pope Francis backs such fervent appeals. He reminded the UN General Assembly delegates on September 25 that “there is an urgent need to work for a world free of nuclear weapons”.

Speaking at the opening of the Conference, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that “the CTBT is essential to realizing our vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. It will help ensure that the international community is no longer forced to live in the shadow of nuclear weapons”.

He also promised: “As a former Chairman of the CTBT Preparatory Committee, I am personally committed to doing everything possible to see this Treaty enter into force,” adding jokingly that in line with his name “spelled B-A-N, I am determined to ban any nuclear tests”.



CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo expressed his ardent wish that more be done and that Member States show real leadership in advancing the entry into force of the Treaty.



“2016 will mark twenty years since the CTBT was opened for signature. I don’t regard this as a reason for celebration. Almost twenty years later, we find ourselves at a conference provided for under Article XIV of the Treaty to accelerate entry into force,” Zerbo (left photo) told IDN.

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signature in 1996 and aims to put a cap on the development of nuclear weapons as well as prohibit all nuclear weapon test explosions worldwide.

But it has not entered into force because eight states have yet to ratify it. These are: China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, United States and Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). They are the remaining States from a list of 44 nuclear technology holders at the time of the final negotiations late 1990’s.

CTBT establishes a global network of monitoring facilities and allows for on-site inspections of suspicious events anywhere in the world. The overall accord contains a preamble, 17 treaty articles, two treaty annexes and a protocol detailing verification procedures.

The Kazakh foreign minister recalled that 24 years ago when the country became independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan had over 1,400 nuclear warheads. It was a nuclear weapon test site and hosted biological and chemical weapon production facilities.

“In our first decade of independence, we decided to dismantle all Soviet weapons systems and facilities and were at the forefront of signing important international nonproliferation treaties,” said Idrissov. ☺

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“We decided to help the world to become safer and that decision inspired others. Achieving a nuclear free world is a difficult task. As a young nation we want to inspire everyone. Both Japan and Kazakhstan suffered the ugliest effects of the militarism of nuclear weapons. The 500 nuclear tests that happened in Kazakhstan is a great reminder of the most devastating danger of this type of weapon,” Kazakh Foreign Minister (left in picture) said.

Japanese Foreign Minister Kishida, Conference co-chair, recalled the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, his hometown, and Nagasa-

ki.

The banning of nuclear testing is an effective pillar in nuclear disarmament and CTBT has contributed to enhancing the norm of nuclear test ban, he argued. “We must accelerate our efforts towards the early entry into force of the treaty.”



Kishida (left in picture) also highlighted the need to promote further development of the International Monitoring System (IMS) and provide training for operators of the National Data Center that supports IMS. IMS is a worldwide network that will help to verify compliance, detect and confirm violations of the CTBT. Today, the IMS is 80 percent complete and currently consists of 254 monitoring stations and 10 of the 16 radionuclide laboratories that have been certified.

In order to make the necessary preparations to implement the CTBT, a Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) was set up in 1996 in Vienna.

Zerbo agrees with the Kazakh Foreign Minister that a more “aggressive approach” is required. “They want to act constructively but in an aggressive manner to be able to get this treaty closed and to go beyond the normal diplomatic chart which is: we call upon all countries to ratify, wait two years and again go through the rhetoric. We need to have a concrete plan of action and a timeframe of what we want to achieve,” he added.

The Preparatory Commission for the CTBTO is intended to be created as soon as all nations ratify the treaty. However, Zerbo argues that even if the organization has not been officially created, they are already working accordingly as if it was an organization itself.

“We are a group of more than 400 people who are working effectively. We cannot continue engaging people, spending tax payers’ money, building such an infrastructure like the International Monitoring System and then say that it is not ready in entering into force,” the CTBTO Executive Secretary said. ➔

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Zerbo considers the year of 2006 as a landmark when they detected the DPRK nuclear test. “We proved to the international community that we can detect nuclear test explosion with efficiency. We have a framework that works effectively to provide States what was required under the treaty, that is, giving data, showing we can provide information that any nuclear test explosion would go undetected.”

According to Des Browne, member of the CTBT Group of Eminent Persons (GEM) and Vice-Chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative, the answer still lies in politics. While the U.S. was the first signatory (September 24, 1996) and one of the instigators of the treaty, it has not ratified due to domestic politics.

“Some barriers are related to international politics. In China’s case, they have made very clear they would ratify a minute after the U.S. does so. If we could break any of resistance in the Middle East countries, (the ratification) could come in a cascade effect. The same thing applies to India and Pakistan: it is about regional politics,” said Browne to IDN.

The U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken confirmed the country’s engagement in pushing the treaty to be approved by the Senate.

“Given the clear and convincing evidence we know that to enforce the comprehensive ban treaty is good for the security of the U.S. and it is good for the international security. It is a key step in diminishing world’s reliance on nuclear weapons and reduce the risk of a nuclear arm race,” Blinken said.

He added: “The U.S. is committed to the treaty and we are working aggressively to build the case at home for ratification. Other States should also be pursuing ratification and ensuring their plans for how they are doing so, there is no reason to wait on any country. CTBT is not an abstract concept for the theoretical world. It is a firm and a certain step to a peace and security for our own citizens and to our own people of the world.”

World history has proven that nuclear weapons are destructive and indiscriminate causing health and environmental impacts. For Nobuyasu Abe, Vice-Chairman at the Japan Atomic Energy Commission and also a member of GEM, people realize this kind of weapon shouldn’t be used anymore.

“If the U.S. thinks well and considers the long term benefits for the country they should support the ratification because such weapon can be hardly used. So why do you need to keep on testing? They do not need to test anymore; they have conducted 1,000 nuclear tests, the biggest number among the countries. That time is over. It will become a useless and unusable asset,” Abe told IDN.

A world free of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons is achievable by 2045, believes Des Browne. Thirty years ago, a meeting between U.S. President Ronald Reagan and his counterpart from the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, proposed banning all ballistic missiles. This meeting took place in 1986.

“For ten minutes they opened up the possibility of a world free of nuclear weapons. I personally think that the state of politics at the moment has to be step by step but it is possible. It will happen unexpectedly. Things can change very quickly. I don’t think we failed at all,” Des Browne insisted. [IDN-InDepthNews – 30 September 2015] ◆

*Note: Photos of UNSG Ban Ki-moon, CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo, Kazakh Foreign Minister Erlan Idrissov and his Japanese counterpart Fumio Kishida are being published by courtesy of CTBTO.*

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## U.S. 100th Member State to Join Nuke Terrorism Treaty

By Thalif Deen



UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - A 1997 movie titled “The Peacemaker” –partly shot outside the United Nations – dramatised the story of a Yugoslav terrorist who acquires a backpack-sized nuclear weapon, gone missing after a train wreck in rural Russia, and brings it to New York to detonate it outside U.N. headquarters.

Was it another Hollywood fantasy? Or a disaster waiting to happen?

Conscious of the remote possibility of a terrorist group arming itself with stolen nuclear weapons, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly back in April 2005 and entered into force in July 2007.

Currently, there are 99 states parties who have ratified the treaty, including the nuclear powers China, France, India, Russia, and the United Kingdom.

On Wednesday, the United States became the 100th state party when it handed over the instruments of ratification to the U.N. Treaty Section.

“This is good news – as with the ratification of any Treaty or Convention limiting the use of nuclear weapons by a major nuclear weapon state,” Jayantha Dhanapala (above in picture), the former U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, told IPS.

He said it is useful to recall that it was Russia that initiated this Convention in 2005 and to date there are 115 signatories and 99 states parties.

“Nuclear terrorism has been widely feared especially after 9/11 and it is well known that non-state actors like Al Qaeda and now ISIL (Islamic State in the Levant) are engaged in a quest for nuclear materials to make a nuclear weapon, however rudimentary,” said Dhanapala, who has been President of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, since 2007.

“And yet we must not delude ourselves into over estimating the significance of this action when more urgent treaties like the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) await ratification by the United States and seven other states in order to ensure its entry into force rendering permanent the norm against nuclear weapon testing – an important brake on the development of nuclear weapons,” he added.

As long as 15,850 nuclear warheads are held by nine countries – 93 percent with the United States and Russia – their use in a war, caused by deliberate political intent or by accident and by nation states or non state actors – remain a frightening reality with appalling humanitarian consequences and irreversible ecological and genetic effects, said Dhanapala, who also serves as a member of the Board of Sponsors of The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and a governing board member of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). ☺

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The Nuclear Terrorism Convention is described as part of global efforts to prevent terrorists from gaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

It details offences relating to unlawful and intentional possession and use of radioactive material or radioactive devices, and use or damage of nuclear facilities.

The convention is also designed to promote cooperation among countries through the sharing of information and the provision of assistance for investigations and extraditions.



Dr. M.V. Ramana (left in picture), a physicist and lecturer at Princeton University's Program on Science and Global Security and the Nuclear Futures Laboratory, told IPS: "I would like to take the conversation in a different direction and ask what is nuclear terrorism?"

He said Webster's dictionary defines terrorism as "the systematic use of terror especially as a means of coercion."

Nuclear weapons can cause massive death and destruction; any population faced with this possibility would be terrorized, he argued.

"Think of the people in any number of countries in the Middle East who are told by the U.S. President or some senior official that 'all options are on the table', implying, of course, the use of nuclear weapons."

Under any fair and just definition of terrorism, anyone who uses a nuclear weapon to threaten another population would be a terrorist. This includes those who use nuclear weapons "just for deterrence," he declared.

Remember that the ability to credibly project terror is ultimately at the heart of the strategy of deterrence and the safety that it is supposed to derive from deterrence is, as Winston Churchill proclaimed, "the sturdy child of terror."

"I think the challenge for those seeking peace is to shift the discourse away from "nuclear terrorism by non-state actors" and

turn the attention onto nuclear weapon states, which base their policies on the threat of nuclear death and destruction, and the urgency of disarming them," said Dr Ramana who is author of several publications, including *The Power of Promise: Examining Nuclear Energy in India.*

Rose Gottemoeller, U.S. Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security said last week that when it comes to nuclear terrorism, "we are safer now than we were five years ago, but more remains to be done."

The United States, she said, will continue to work with international partners to ensure that dangerous nuclear materials are accounted for and secured worldwide.

"Unending vigilance is required if we are to ensure that terrorist groups who may seek to acquire these materials are never able to do so." ➡

*Photo above: Dr M.V. Ramana | Credit. [www.ptinceton.edu](http://www.ptinceton.edu)*

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Gottemoeller (left) said the United States is the largest national contributor to the IAEA's (International Atomic Energy Agency) Nuclear Security Fund, providing more than 70 million dollars since 2010.

These funds support cost-free experts, mission and technical visits to Member States, the development of nuclear security guidance and best practices, and the Incident and Trafficking Database.

She said the State Department's Counter Nuclear Smuggling Program (CNSP) is also working with key international partners to strengthen capacity to investigate nuclear smuggling networks, secure materials in illegal circulation, and prosecute the criminals who are involved.

Countries such as Georgia and Moldova are to be commended for their recent arrests of criminals attempting to traffic highly enriched uranium (HEU); significant progress has been made in this area. Unfortunately, continued seizures of weapon-usable nuclear materials indicate that these materials are still available on the black market, she pointed out.

According to the United Nations, some of the key provisions of the Convention include: the criminalization of planning, threatening, or carrying out acts of nuclear terrorism; the requirement for States to criminalize these offenses through national legislation and to establish penalties in line with the gravity of such crimes; conditions under which States may establish jurisdiction for offenses; and guidelines for extradition and other measures of punishment.

Additionally, there is the requirement for States to make every effort to adopt appropriate measures to ensure the protection of radioactive material; and the distinction that the Convention does not cover the activities of armed forces during an armed conflict or military exercise and cannot be interpreted as addressing the "legality of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by States." (IPS | 30 September 2015) ◆



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## Japan and Kazakh to Facilitate Entry into Force of Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty

By Kanya D'Almeida



UNITED NATIONS (IDN) - Ahead of a major international conference on September 29 at the UN headquarters in New York, pressure is mounting on the eight states whose backing is vital to the entering-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT): China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States.

Negotiated at the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on September 10, 1996, the CTBT boasts 183 signatures and 164 ratifications, but remains hamstrung by the refusal of eight of the 44 so-called Annex II nations (those that possessed nuclear facilities at the time of negotiations) to sign and ratify the Treaty.

A comprehensive ban on nuclear testing is widely seen as an essential component of, and the final barrier to, global nuclear disarmament and a non-proliferation regime.

The upcoming Article XIV Conference (or the Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the CTBT) is expected to target these eight nuclear-weapons states, in the hope of paving the way to a legally binding norm against nuclear testing.

Speaking to IDN on the sidelines of the 25th UN Conference on Disarmament Issues that took place in the Japanese city of Hiroshima on August 26-28, Deputy Foreign Minister for Kazakhstan Yerzhan Ashikbayev explained that supporting the CTBT is a "natural stance" for his country, which will be co-chairing the September 29 Article XIV conference along with Japan. ➡ *Graphic above: CTBTO*

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*International Press Syndicate Disarmament Talk with Deputy Foreign Minister for Kazakhstan Yerzhan*

The 18,000-square-km Semipalatinsk Test Site in northeastern Kazakhstan was the primary testing ground for the nuclear weapons programme of the now defunct Soviet Union. Between 1949 and 1989 the area endured some 456 nuclear tests, which directly impacted the health of an estimated 200,000 residents including an increased incidence of cancer and other conditions related to radiation exposure.

Given that 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki – resulting in upwards of 220,000 deaths – Japan is also naturally leading the diplomatic charge to prevent nuclear testing.

Acknowledging that the summit has a “big agenda” to tackle, Ambassador Kazutoshi Aikawa, Director-General of Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department with Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs told IDN he is “hopeful that representatives from the eight [outlying] states will join us in making this meeting a success.”

In the five decades between 1945 and 1996 – the year the CTBT was adopted – the United States carried out over 1,000 nuclear tests and the Soviet Union conducted over 700. France also ran upwards of 200 tests during this time period, while the UK and China were each responsible for some 45 tests.

According to the Vienna-based Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO), the body tasked with monitoring compliance with the treaty, only three countries have undertaken nuclear explosions since 1996: India and Pakistan (in 1998), and the DPRK (in 2006, 2009 and 2013).

In total, some 2,050 tests were carried out since the end of World War II in over 60 different locations around the globe. The CTBTO says these test sites “offer stunning contrasts”, from tropical South Pacific atolls (which served as testing grounds for the U.S., the UK and France), to Novaya Zemlya, the “remote ice-bound archipelago in the Arctic Ocean” that served for many years as the Soviet Union’s testing site. ↻

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*International Press Syndicate Disarmament Talk with Ambassador Sérgio Duarte, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs*

With its global network of nearly 300 seismic, hydroacoustic, infrasound and radionuclide detecting stations, the CTBTO has made it much harder for states to conduct covert nuclear tests – be they in the atmosphere, underground, or underwater.

Yet without the eight crucial signatures of key nuclear weapons states, the Treaty is powerless to impose sanctions or other punitive measures on violators, even if tests are detected.

In an interview with IDN at the August disarmament conference, former United Nations Under Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs Jayantha Dhanapala expressed concern about the “fragility” of the prevailing political reality vis-à-vis nuclear testing.

“We are aware the DPRK might test, and we’ve also heard from William Perry, former U.S. defense secretary, that Russian scientists are pressuring the political leadership of that country – which has signed and ratified the treaty – to resume testing,” he said.

“If this is true then there is a grave danger that the CTBT is in some kind of peril,” added Dhanapala, who also serves as president of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs.

“Since the UN Security Council is the custodian of international peace and security, a unanimous resolution stating that the continuation of the moratorium against nuclear testing is a fundamental element of peace and security would help bolster the legitimacy of the CTBT,” he stated. Indeed, the UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon himself has made personal appeals to the eight states to ratify the treaty.

In a statement delivered to the world body on September 10, the International Day Against Nuclear Tests, Ban said, “I have met with victims of nuclear tests. I have witnessed the lasting societal, environmental and economic damage nuclear tests have caused [...]. Many have never recovered from the legacies of nuclear testing – including poisoned groundwater, cancer, birth defects and radioactive fallout.”

Welcoming the voluntary moratoria on testing imposed by many nuclear-armed states, Ban added: “Moratoria are no substitute for a CTBT in force. The three nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea are proof of this. ☹

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“Almost two decades after the CTBT was negotiated, it is long past time for the treaty to enter into force,” he concluded.

According to the National Resources Defense Council, nuclear tests carried out between 1945 and 1980 accounted for 510 megatons; of these, atmospheric tests alone yielded 428 mt – the equivalent of 29,000 Hiroshima-sized bombs.

While the amount of radioactivity released by each test depends largely on the size, scale and type of explosion, countless scientific studies have documented their adverse health and environmental impacts, including severe air and groundwater pollution, damage to flora and fauna and, for humans, injuries to internal organs, skin, eyes and even cells.

Ionizing radiation, the umbrella term for various particulate matter and rays given off by radioactive materials, is a scientifically proven carcinogen. Radiation exposure is known to cause leukaemia, as well as a cancers of the thyroid, lung and breast.

A chapter on the effects of nuclear tests on the CTBTO website explains that “studies and evaluations including an assessment by Arjun Makhijani on the health effects of nuclear weapon complexes, estimate that cancer fatalities due to the global radiation doses from the atmospheric nuclear testing programmes of the five nuclear-weapon States amount to hundreds of thousands.”

Furthermore, the CTBTO states, “A 1991 study by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) estimated that the radiation and radioactive materials from atmospheric testing taken in by people up until the year 2000 would cause 430,000 cancer deaths, some of which had already occurred by the time the results were published.

“The study predicted that roughly 2.4 million people could eventually die from cancer as a result of atmospheric testing.”

Given these grim realities, entering-into-force of the CTBT is an urgent task, but while many have admitted that ratification by all required parties is not an “if” but a “when”, even experts are hard-pressed to put an exact date on that “when”.

Asked when the CTBT will become a legal reality, Ambassador Sérgio de Queiroz Duarte, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and President of the 2005 NPT Review Conference told IDN, “This is what was once called the 60,000-dollar question. Now it is a 60-million-dollar question and soon it will be the 60-billion-dollar question but still – no answer.”

“The culprit is the situation of the world as it has evolved,” he said. “Powerful nations want to keep their power and privileges.”

At present, Ashikbayev estimates there are 16,000 warheads in the arsenals of nuclear powers, capable of “destroying the earth several times over.”

Data from the Arms Control Association suggest that Russia and the United States account for 90 percent of the global nuclear warhead inventory, with 7,700 and 7,100 weapons respectively. France follows at a distant third place with 300 warheads, while China boasts 250 weapons and the UK is in possession of 225.

Pakistan and India have 110 and 100 nukes respectively, Israel 80 and the DPRK 10 – though experts say these numbers are harder to verify.

Approximately 10,000 warheads are in military service and the remaining 6,000 are reportedly awaiting dismantlement, according to the Arms Control Association. [IDN-InDepthNews – 21 September 2015] ◆

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# BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

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### In-Depth Reports

## **Nuke Test Ban Treaty Still in Limbo, U.N. Complains**

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which was adopted by the U.N. General Assembly back in 1996, has still not come into force for one primary reason: eight key countries have either refused to sign or have held back their ratifications.

The three who have not signed – India, North Korea and Pakistan – and the five who have not ratified — the United States, China, Egypt, Iran and Israel – remain non-committal 19 years following the adoption of the treaty.

When the United Nations last week commemorated International Day Against Nuclear Tests, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appealed once again to all remaining States – especially the eight holdovers — to sign and ratify the Treaty as “a critical step on the road to a nuclear-weapons-free world.”

Currently, there is a voluntary moratoria on testing imposed by many nuclear-armed States.

“But moratoria are no substitute for a CTBT in force. The three nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea) are proof of this,” Ban said

The warning comes amidst reports Tuesday that North Korea has re-started its programme to produce nuclear weapons.

But chances of all eight countries coming on board in the not-too-distant future are remote, says John Hallam of the Human Survival Project (HSP) and People for Nuclear Disarmament (PND), a joint project between PND and the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney, Australia.

“I think it is most unlikely that the recalcitrant 8 states will sign and ratify by 2016,” Hallam told IPS.

They include the United States itself, which though has signed, he said, but the Republicans have made it very clear they will not ratify..

Hallam said this also includes both India and Pakistan who have made it clear they have no intention of either signing or ratifying – “least of all, India under current Prime Minister Narendra Modi (although the nuclear disarmament movement in India has over the years advocated signature and ratification of the CTBT for India).”

Finally, he said, it includes China and one or two others who say they will ratify as soon as the United States has done so.

At a high-level panel discussion last week to commemorate International Day Against Nuclear Tests, Ban said: “The goal of ending nuclear tests has been a leading concern throughout my diplomatic career. “

As Secretary-General, and depository of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, “I have made achieving a legal ban on nuclear testing a personal priority.”

He said he has been to Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan, the site of 456 tests, including some of the largest in history.

“I have met with victims of nuclear tests. I have witnessed the lasting societal, environmental and economic damage nuclear tests have caused.”

Since the first test in New Mexico 70 years ago, he pointed out, the world has endured over two thousand nuclear tests. Those tests devastated pristine environments and local populations around the world. ☞

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Many have never recovered from the legacies of nuclear testing – including poisoned groundwater, cancer, birth defects and radioactive fallout, he noted.

“The best way to honour the victims of past tests is to prevent any in the future,” he declared.

The CTBT is a legally-binding, verifiable means by which to constrain the quantitative and qualitative development of nuclear weapons.

Hallam told IPS over 1100 nuclear tests were carried out by the United States in Nevada, Alaska, the Marshall Islands, other parts of the Pacific, and in outer space.

Tests carried out in Nevada resulted in large-scale contamination of downwind inhabitants and large-scale morbidity. He said the largest ever U.S. test was the 15Megaton Castle Bravo test, which contaminated the crew of the Japanese fishing boat Lucky Dragon, bringing about an agonizing slow death from radiation sickness, and contaminating the Marshall Islands.

The largest nuclear test ever was carried out by the Soviets in the early '60s in Novaya Zemlya, a large island above the arctic circle, and known as ‘Tsar Bomba’ (King of Bombs), he noted.

At 60 megatons, it vaporized the sacred hunting grounds of the Nenets people, sent fallout right around the world and caused the planet to ring like a bell with seismic shock for hours.

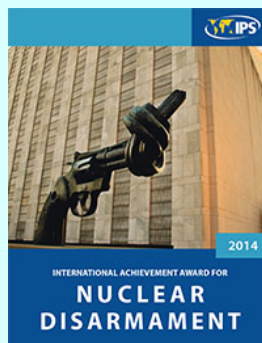
Hallam said the Soviets carried out around 800 nuclear tests, many of them at the Semipalatinsk test site, and causing widespread radioactive contamination with catastrophic effects on local populations.

In addition, nuclear tests have been carried out by the UK, (many of them in Maralinga and Emu Field, Australia), France (Algeria and the Pacific), China (Sinkiang), India (Pokhran, Rajasthan) Pakistan (Baluchistan), and the North Korean, French, Chinese, and British tests have all inflicted radiation-based disease and death on local populations and participants.

Nuclear testing is the backbone of nuclear arms-racing and proliferation. A resumption of nuclear testing, or the conducting of a new nuclear test by any country – including the DPRK – helps to inch the world toward an abyss into which we hope it will never go, Hallam said.

The best way to halt proliferation and nail down a ‘no nuclear testing’ norm is for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, which outlaws nuclear testing, to come into force, he declared.

Meanwhile, President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has launched an international Project, called ATOM (the acronym for Abolish Testing. Our Mission), a worldwide e-campaign, calling on world leaders to end nuclear tests, once and for all. (IPS | 16 September 2015) ◆



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## Opinion: Campaign to End Nuclear Tests - Kazakhstan Launches ATOM E

By Kairat Abdrakhmanov\*

UNITED NATIONS (IPS) - Despite United Nations General Assembly resolutions since 1946, calling for an end to lethal arsenal, the possession of nuclear weapons has continued to be a symbol of scientific sophistication or military power, until 29 August 1991, when Kazakhstan, upon gaining independence, closed its Nuclear Test Site in Semipalatinsk – the second largest in the world.

This action and the renunciation of our nuclear arsenal – the fourth largest in the world, were unprecedented acts to demonstrate to the world that Kazakhstan does not need these powerful nuclear weapons tests and weapons.

The closure of Semipalatinsk led the way for the closure of other sites in Nevada, Novaya Zemlya, Lop Nur, Moruroa, Kiribati and others.

The detonation of over 600 2000 nuclear tests globally, four decades on the territory covering a total area is 1.5 million people and a land

In fact, the entire territory of lygon, comprising of 11 units sides nuclear, these included fence and warning systems, weapons test sites. Among mention the deadly biocheapons tested in the Aral Sea Site on the former Renais-

Considering the actions taken thus has the full right to call measures on the Path to Zero. here and the 1996 Advisory Justice should spur the global cisively for the ultimate and clear tests and weapons.

President Nursultan Nazar-nched a worldwide e-project, called ATOM (Abo-calling on world leaders to for all. To draw attention to kov, the Goodwill Ambassa-himself a victim of nuclear

Kazakhstan and is here in New York to share his life experiences with us. ➔



warheads, one fourth of all were conducted in a span of of the Semipalatinsk test site 18.000 sq. km, affecting over mass of 300,000 sq. km.

Kazakhstan, was one big po-spread over the country. Be-also air, space, missile de-as well as high-powered laser these I would also like to mical and bacteriological we-(which was the Barkhan Test sance Island).

by my country, Kazakhstan for the universal and prompt This frightening data cited of the International Court of community to act more de-irrevocable prohibition of nu-

bayev of Kazakhstan has lau-campaign, an international lish Testing. Our Mission), end nuclear tests, once and the campaign, Karpek Kuyudor of the ATOM project, radiation, has travelled from

*\*Ambassador Kairat Abdrakhmanov is Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the United Nations*

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Despite being the largest producer and supplier of uranium in the world, Kazakhshtan's firm position demonstrates that harmony and cooperation can be stronger armaments for global peace and security than any weaponry.

Disarmament critics still insist that nuclear weapons cannot be dis-invented and that the nuclear genie is well out of the bottle. Kazakhstan and several other countries have proven that it is within our power to put this monstrous genie back into the bottle.

Kazakhstan was amongst the first countries to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). My country is committed to the Treaty, and along with Japan will co-chair the International Conference on Article XIV to CTBT on 29 September 2015, to work intensely to bring its entry into force.

This year marks the 70th Anniversary of the United Nations and the start of a transformative Post-2015 development agenda. We must thus have the political will to invest vast resources that would be available as a result of nuclear disarmament to meet compelling human needs and achieve a peaceful and secure world.

Today, a new impetus is needed to move the disarmament machinery forward, considering that the 2015 review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) did not fulfil its anticipated outcome. We commend the three meetings held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna, and the many unilateral, bilateral and collective efforts of several countries, together with the dynamic efforts of civil society.

These actions serve as a wake-up call to unite for a nuclear-weapon-free world. We, therefore, welcome the momentum gained by the Humanitarian Pledge put forward by Austria, which Kazakhstan endorsed on 10 July 2015. Likewise, we seek support at the forthcoming First Committee Meeting in October this year for the initiative of our President calling on the international community to adopt the Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World. We do not consider this document as the basis for a major debate or tying down the United Nations disarmament machinery. Its value lies in the fact that, despite ongoing disagreements on the means to achieve nuclear disarmament, there is full agreement on the fundamental goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

I would like to point to other examples of successful cooperation between the East and West with the participation of Kazakhstan:

1. When our country became the "epicentre of the world" after renouncing its nuclear arsenal, it was the collaboration with the Russian Federation and the U.S. that made possible the removal and disposal of our nuclear warheads and missiles, as well as the destruction and decommissioning the infrastructure of the former test site.
2. Kazakhstan, along with other countries of the region, established the Central Asian Nuclear-Free-Zone with the signing of the Treaty of Semipalatinsk in 2006, which speedily came into force in 2009. In May 2014, representatives of the "nuclear five" (the P5) signed a Protocol on negative security assurances to the participant states of that Treaty, of which four have already ratified it.

This year, the Central Asian states adopted an Action Plan to strengthen nuclear security in the region. Now we are elaborating regional instruments for the prevention of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials and combating nuclear terrorism.

3. In 2014, we worked to ensure the safety and preservation of hundreds of kilograms of nuclear material, remaining in the galleries at the Massif Degelen, also known as Plutonium Mountain, located at the former Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site. This measure will prevent leakage and improper use of these materials. The constant and perennial trilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan, Russia and the U.S., was announced in Seoul in 2012 by the Presidents of the three countries. ☺

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It is a striking proof that only a spirit of trust and mutual understanding will make our world secure. Today Kazakhstan is actively preparing for the Fourth Summit to be held in Washington D.C., in 2016 and will host a preparatory Sherpas Meeting in Almaty from 2-4 November 2015.

4. Another significant achievement has been the Agreement signed on 27 August 2015 by the Government of Kazakhstan and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for establishing the International Bank of Low-Enriched Uranium (LEU) in 2017 in Eastern Kazakhstan.

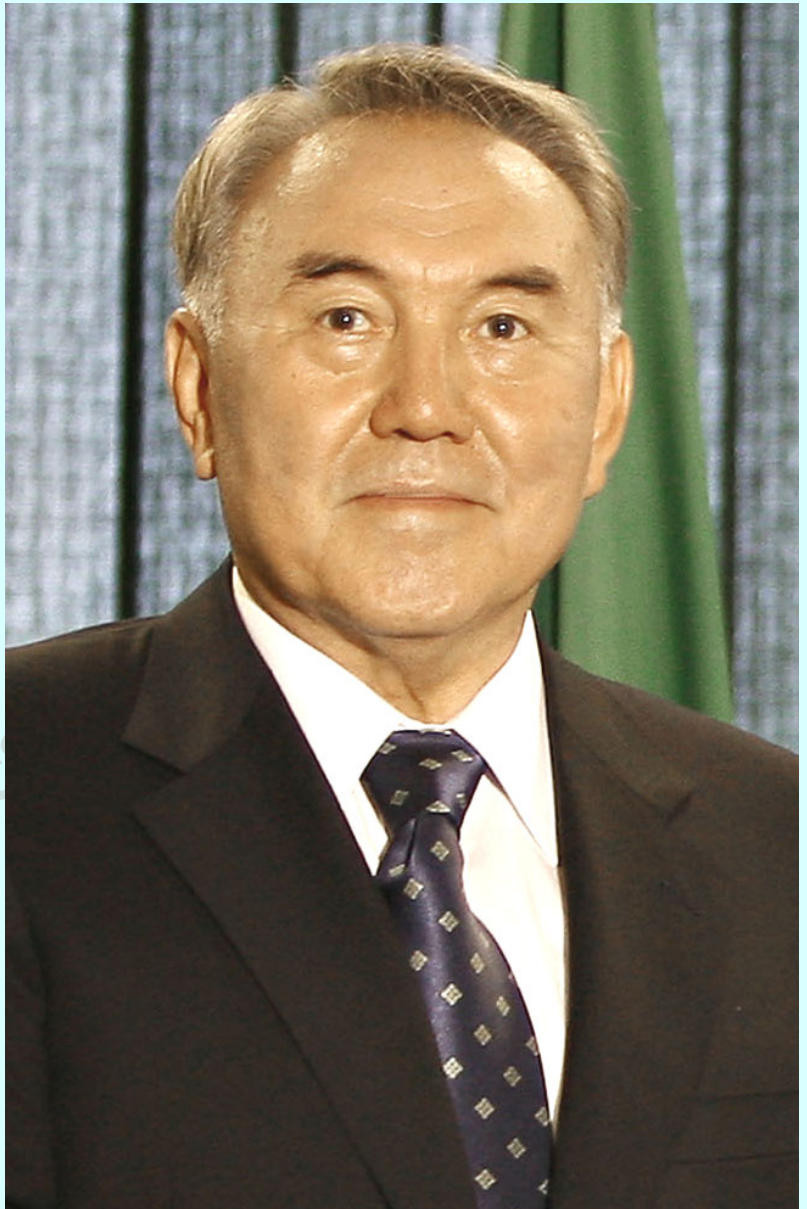
This initiative is yet another concrete contribution of Kazakhstan in strengthening the non-proliferation regime, and eliminating lacunae existing in the international legal framework. The Bank will allow Member States the right to reliable access to fuel for peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It was again the collaboration between the East and West, particularly, Kazakhstan, the P5, as well as the European Union, Norway, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates -as the main donors of the project – that the Bank became a reality.

5. A most recent example of cooperation is related to the unique Cosmodrome Baikonur located in Kazakhstan – the only site in the world from where space crafts are launched to the International Space Station. On 2 September 2015, the spacecraft “Soyuz” was launched with a new crew, comprising of Kazakh, Russian and Danish cosmonauts, the latter from the European Space Agency. This, once again should inspire us to work together with hope for the future.

I would like to quote President Nazarbayev, who at the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague reminded the world that “general and complete nuclear disarmament” is the only guarantee of nuclear security. He said that we

should all live up to our responsibilities to our citizens and the global community to deliver political rather than military solutions in the name of international peace. It is therefore the collective responsibility and commitment of everyone, to increase the momentum for anti-tests and anti-nuclear weapons and to find and implement such peaceful solutions so that we do not forget our common humanity. (IPS | 12 September 2015) ◆

*Photo: The president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev in Brasilia. | Credit. Wikimedia Commons*



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## Opinion: Can Nuclear War be Avoided?

By Gunnar Westberg \*

GÖTEBORG, Sweden (IPS) - The Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons had as members former leading politicians or military officers, among others a British Field Marshal, an American General, an American Secretary of Defence and a French Prime Minister.



The commission unanimously agreed in its report in 1996 that “the proposition that nuclear weapons can be retained in perpetuity and never be used – accidentally or by decision – defies credibility. The only complete defence is the elimination of nuclear weapons and assurance that they will never be produced again.”

So that’s it: Nuclear weapons will be used if they are allowed to remain with us. And even a “small” nuclear war, using one percent or less of the world’s nuclear weapons, might cause a worldwide famine leading to the death of a billion humans or more.

Lt Colonel Bruce Blair was for several years in the 1970s commander of U.S. crews with the duty to launch intercontinental nuclear missiles. “I knew how to fire the missiles, I needed no permission,” he states. In the 1990s he was charged with making a review for the U.S. Senate on the question: “Is unauthorised firing of U.S. nuclear weapons a real possibility?”

Blair’s answer was “Yes”, and the risk is not insignificant.

On Hiroshima Day, Aug. 6, this year, a major newspaper in Sweden, Aftonbladet, carried an interview with Colonel Blair, now head of the Global Zero movement for the elimination of nuclear weapons. The reporter asked: “Mr Blair, do you think that nuclear weapons will be used again?” Mr Blair was silent for a while and then responded: “I am afraid it cannot be avoided.

A data code shorter than a Twitter message could be enough.”

Blair reminds us of the story of the ‘Permissive Action Link’, a security device for nuclear weapons, the purpose of which is to prevent their unauthorised arming or detonation.

When Robert McNamara was U.S. Secretary of Defence in the mid-1960s, he issued an order that to be able to fire missiles from submarines, the commanding officer must have received a code which permitted the launch. ☞

*\*Gunnar Westberg, Professor of Medicine in Göteborg, Sweden, and Co-President of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) from 2004 to 2008, describes himself as “generally concerned about with what little wisdom our world is governed”. This article was originally published by the Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research (TFF)*

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However, the navy did not want to be prevented from firing on its own initiative, such as in the case that contact with headquarters was interrupted. The initial code of 00000000 was for this reason retained for many years and was generally known. McNamara, however, did not know this until many years after he left the government.

A Soviet admiral once told me that as late as around 1980 he could fire the missiles from a submarine without a code.

When systems of control of the launch systems are discussed, we often learn – as a kind of post scriptum – that there is a Plan B: If all communication with HQ is dead and the commanders believe the war is on, missiles can be fired. We are never told how this works. But there is a plan B.

What is the situation today? Can an unauthorised launch of nuclear weapons occur? Colonel Blair says “Yes”. Mistakes, misunderstandings, hacker encroachments, human mistakes – there are always risks.

After the end of the Cold War, we have learnt about several “close calls”. There was the Cuban missile crisis and especially the “Soviet submarine left behind”. There was the Petrov Incident in September 1983. There was the possibly worst crisis – worst but little known – of the NATO exercise ‘Able Archer’ in November 1983 when the Soviet leaders expected a NATO attack any moment – and NATO had no insight into the Soviet paranoia.

There are numerous other dangerous incidents about which we have less information.

Martin Hellman, a mathematician and expert in risk analysis, guesses that the risk of a major nuclear war may have been as high as one percent per year during the 40 Cold War years. That sums up to 40 percent. Mankind thus had a slightly better than even chance of not being exterminated. We were lucky.

Maybe the risk is smaller today. But with the risk of proliferation, with new funds allocated to nuclear weapons research and with the increasing tension in international relations, the risk may be increasing again.

As long as nuclear weapons exist the risk exists. The risk of global omnicide, of Assured Destruction.

It is nuclear weapons or us. We cannot co-exist. One of us will have to go.

A prohibition against nuclear weapons is necessary. And it is possible. (IPS | 3 September 2015) ◆

### TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS



<http://www.nuclearabolition.info/documents/Toward a World without Nuclear Weapons 2015.pdf>

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### What Others Say

#### **Opinion: Nuclear States Do Not Comply with the Non-Proliferation Treaty**

By Farhang Jahanpour\*

OXFORD (IPS) - Article Six of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) makes it obligatory for nuclear states to get rid of their nuclear weapons as part of a bargain that requires the non-nuclear states not to acquire nuclear weapons. Apart from the NPT provisions, there have been a number of other rulings that have reinforced those requirements.

However, while nuclear states have vigorously pursued a campaign of non-proliferation, they have violated many NPT and other international regulations.

An advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice in 1996 stated: "There exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control." Nuclear powers have ignored that opinion.

The nuclear states, especially the United States and Russia, have further violated the Treaty by their efforts to upgrade and diversify their nuclear weapons. The United States has developed the "Reliable Replacement Warhead", a new type of nuclear warhead to extend the viability of its nuclear arsenal.

The United States and possibly Russia are also developing tactical nuclear warheads with lower yields, which can be used on the battlefield without producing a great deal of radiation. Despite U.S. President Barack Obama's pledge to reduce and ultimately abolish nuclear weapons, it has emerged that the United States is in the process of developing new categories of nuclear weapons, including B61-12 at a projected cost of 348 billion dollars over the next decade

India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea cannot be regarded as nuclear states. Since Article 9 of the NPT defines Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) as those that had manufactured and tested a nuclear device prior to 1 January 1967, it is not possible for India, Pakistan, Israel or North Korea to be regarded as nuclear weapon states.

All those countries are in violation of the NPT, and providing them with nuclear assistance, such as the U.S. agreement with India to supply it with nuclear reactors and advanced nuclear technology, constitutes violations of the Treaty. The same applies to U.S. military cooperation with Israel and Pakistan.

Paragraph 14 of the binding U.N. Security Council Resolution 687 that called for the disarmament of Iraq also specified the establishment of a zone free of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) in the Middle East.

It was clearly understood by all the countries that joined the U.S.-led coalition to oust Saddam Hussein from Kuwait that after the elimination of Iraqi WMDs, Israel would be required to get rid of its nuclear arsenal. Israel – and by extension the countries that have not implemented that paragraph – have violated that binding resolution. Indeed, both the United States and Israel are believed to maintain nuclear weapons in the region.

During the apartheid era, Israel and South Africa collaborated in manufacturing nuclear weapons, with Israel leading the way. In 2010 it was reported that "the 'top secret' minutes of meetings between senior officials from the two countries in 1975 show that South Africa's Defence Minister P.W. Botha asked for nuclear warheads and the then Israeli Defence Minister Shimon Peres responded by offering them 'in three sizes'." ☞

*\* Farhang Jahanpour is a former professor and dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Isfahan and a former Senior Research Fellow at Harvard University. He is a tutor in the Department of Continuing Education and a member of Kellogg College, University of Oxford. This is the second of a series of 10 articles in which Jahanpour looks at various aspects and implications of the framework agreement on Iran's nuclear programme reached in July 2015 between Iran and the United States, United Kingdom, Russia, France, China and Germany, plus the European Union*

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### What Others Say

The documents were uncovered by an American academic, Sasha Polakow-Suransky, in research for a book on the close relationship between the two countries. Israeli officials tried hard to prevent the publication of those documents. In 1977, South Africa signed a pact with Israel that included the manufacturing of at least six nuclear bombs.

The 1995 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference also called for “the early establishment by regional parties of a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other WMDs and their delivery systems”. The international community has ignored these resolutions by not pressing Israel to give up its nuclear weapons. Indeed, any call for a nuclear free zone in the Middle East has been opposed by Israel and the United States.

The 2000 NPT Review Conference called on “India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the Treaty as Non-Nuclear Weapons States (NNWS) promptly and without condition”. States Parties also agreed to “make determined efforts” to achieve universality. Since 2000, little effort has been made to encourage India, Pakistan or Israel to accede as NNWS.

The declaration agreed by the Iranian government and visiting European Union foreign ministers (from Britain, France and Germany) that reached an agreement on Iran’s accession to the Additional Protocol and suspension of its enrichment for more than two years also called for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction throughout the Middle East.

The three foreign ministers made the following commitment: “They will cooperate with Iran to promote security and stability in the region including the establishment of a zone free from weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East in accordance with the objectives of the United Nations.” Twelve years after signing that declaration, the three European countries and the international community have failed to bring about a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

While, during the Cold War, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) refused to rule out first use of nuclear weapons due to the proximity of Soviet forces to European capitals, this policy has not been revised since the end of the Cold War. There have been repeated credible reports that the Pentagon has been considering the use of nuclear bunker-buster weapons to destroy Iran’s nuclear sites.

For the past 2,000 years and more, mankind has tried to define the requirements of a just war. During the past few decades, some of these principles have been enshrined in legally-binding international agreements and conventions. They include the Covenant of the League of Nations after the First World War, the 1928 Pact of Paris, and the Charter of the United Nations.

A few ideas are common to all these definitions, namely that any military action should be based on self-defence, be in compliance with international law, be proportionate, be a matter of last resort, and not target civilians and non-combatants.

Other ideas flow from these: the emphasis on arbitration and the renunciation of first resort to force in the settlement of disputes, and the principle of collective self-defence. It is difficult to see how the use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with any of these requirements. Yet, despite many international calls for nuclear disarmament, nuclear states have refused to abide by the NPT regulations and get rid of their nuclear weapons.

In his first major foreign policy speech in Prague on 5 April 2009, President Barack Obama spoke about his vision of getting rid of nuclear weapons. He said: “The existence of thousands of nuclear weapons is the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War... Today, the Cold War has disappeared but thousands of those weapons have not. In a strange turn of history, the threat of global nuclear war has gone down, but the risk of a nuclear attack has gone up.” (IPS | 5 September 2015) ◆

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

### What Others Say

#### Why China Should Worry about Pak

By Vinod Saigha, Retired Major-General of the Indian Army

*In excerpt from a paper presented at ICRIER on 9 August 2009 is reproduced below:*

*“The US and its allies have been concentrating on the nuclear proliferation threat building up in Iran and North Korea. After the A Q Khan episode Pakistan seems to have been put on the back burner. As a matter of fact the Pak nuclear threat is far more insidious and widespread than is currently assessed in most quarters. Iran’s capability vis-à-vis Pakistan on a scale of 0 to 9 is not even 1; Pakistan would be hovering around 7 or 8 in its comparative nuclear capability. Likewise in the case of North Korea although it has gone much ahead of Iran, it is not in the same league as Pakistan in the number of nuclear weapons that it possesses or is likely to possess in the next decade or so. What is more relevant North Korea does not have the radical groups that are capable of carrying out terrorist acts of varying intensities practically across the globe; Iran to date limits its reach to Lebanon, Syria & Gaza”.*

Other disturbing trends that should make the world sit up and take note are:

- Of all the countries that possess nuclear weapons Pakistan is the only one that routinely threatens to use them. To date that threat has been limited to India. What happens in future is anybody’s guess.
- With the help of China and North Korea Pakistan has developed the missile capability to extend its reach well beyond India to cover much of the Middle East and Central Asia.
- At the start of its nuclear weapons programme the principal financiers were Saudi Arabia and Libya. After the big donation a stadium was named after Col. Gaddafi. Libya has become a failed state and is now out of the reckoning. The Saudis retain the right to demand return on investment. A part of the transfers might already have been made.
- From the very beginning Pakistan announced that it was producing an Islamic bomb; never a bomb against India, in so many words. The connotation of an Islamic bomb could not have been lost on the world. For the time being China can afford to play dumb. But for how long?
- Pakistan has single-handedly held up the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty that was being negotiated in Geneva.

The threat of non-state actors getting hold of a nuclear weapon, device, or suitcase bomb presently relates only to Pakistan, whatever the assurances given by its military that their nuclear weapons are one hundred per cent safe from radical elements. China and the US are two countries that have had a major role in boosting Pakistan’s nuclear programme and nuclear weapons augmentation. China has been a direct booster of Pakistan’s nuclear capability. The evidence is in the public domain and has been fairly well-documented in spite of China’s denials. The US has been an accomplice in the sense that administrations have turned a blind eye to Pakistan’s nuclear weaponisation by certifying on the country’s behalf for grant of billions of dollars even before it became a major non-NATO ally during General Pervez Musharraf’s tenure.

China is further augmenting Pakistan’s nuclear weapons potential by constructing two more reactors in that country. Even before the most recent estimates coming from the US that in ten years Pakistan would have more nuclear weapons than one of the P5 countries, France, it was generally accepted by experts around the world that Pakistan’s nuclear weapons stockpile had gone beyond that of India and that its weapons augmentation programme was the fastest in the world. That being the case, who should be most worried at these developments in a state that although never declared a rogue was known to have been by far the biggest nuclear proliferator.

Although it appears unlikely at the moment, misgivings exist that in the years ahead should Pakistan actually become a failed state and start going under it could well be in the market for selling nuclear weapons for billions of dollars to drug syndicates or whoever would be in a position to pay. Precedent exists. Pakistan has been there before. ☹

*\*This article by first appeared in [The Statesman on August 31, 2015](#)*

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A Q Khan's exports for large sums of money would not have been possible without the connivance of the generals, at the very least they were in the know.

A report attributed to Professor Shaun Gregory of Bradford University in the UK mentioned that Jihadis thrice attacked Pakistan nuclear sites (Times of India, 11 August 2009). It needs to be added that these are incidents that western analysts are aware of. There would have been others that were known only to the Pakistan authorities. Radical Islamists are able to venture out boldly well beyond the frontiers of Pakistan, secure in the knowledge that nobody would dare root out their bases and spawning grounds in Pakistan because of nuclear weapons that they would be able to access should their survival be threatened. This may not be the case now but it is a scenario that cannot be ruled out.

As things stand Pakistan is in a very comfortable position with regard to its growing nuclear arsenal. The United States and China, the two great powers of the world, support Pakistan, internally as well as its projection into Afghanistan via the Taliban based in Pakistan. The new Afghan president Mr. Ashraf Ghani has been pushed in that direction by the US and its allies. Besides India the countries more concerned by the developments in Pakistan and Afghanistan would be Iran, the Central Asian Republics and Russia.

However, their capacity to intervene in any manner, or the desire to do so, appears to be non-existent. That leaves China on their closest ally, surpassing even North Korea. Over the years starting from the end of the 1970s or the early and mid-nineteen eighties China's policy with regard to boosting Pakistan's nuclear weapons capability was wholly and solely India-centric. It is still the case.

In actual fact China should not only come out of its comfort zone with regard to its ally's nuclear capability but should take active measures to limit and roll it back. The US is not going to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for China should its assessment or policy in this regard turn out to be not only wrong, but the biggest folly that it might have committed. This statement turns China's policy on its head.

To elaborate, its leaders do not seem to have realised that routine threats of use of nuclear weapons against India notwithstanding, Pakistani generals would actually be the last persons to start a nuclear conflagration against India. There is no such thing as limited nuclear exchange.

India has a larger Muslim population than Pakistan. Add to it the Muslim population of Bangladesh, the collective Muslim mass residing on the subcontinent exceeds half-a-billion by last count. Limited or otherwise, a nuclear exchange could potentially cripple, to whatever extent, more than half the Muslim population of the globe, possibly posing an existential threat to Islam. The West may not be that alarmed at the prospect. China should be the most worried. Pakistani generals will be unlikely to use the Islamic bomb against India.

The Pakistani tanzems, whose collective might at this point in time were they to act in concert surpasses that of the Pakistan Army, will not attack India with a nuclear weapon. Their first target will be China. More than that, China being a potential world power of the first order and the biggest beneficiary of the Asian century has a bigger stake than the US and its allies to ensure that a nuclear exchange anywhere in Asia does not destroy that dream.

At the end it is important for every nation heading toward the climate change conference in Paris at the year-end to understand that the world has come a long way from Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Dr. Ira Helfand, co-President of IPPNW (International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War) in his brilliant paper on even a very limited nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan has posited that its effect over a period of time could lead to tens, if not hundreds of millions, casualties as far away as USA. What would happen to every single Muslim country in the neighbourhood and China is best left to the imagination of people residing there. More than India it is for China to take note of the ominous developments that it has set in motion. ◆

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### International Press Syndicate Disarmament Talks

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=International+Press+Syndicate+Disarmament+Talks](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=International+Press+Syndicate+Disarmament+Talks)



With Jayantha Dhanapala, Former UN USG for Disarmament Affairs



With Ambassador Aikawa, DG Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, Japan's MOFA



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



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