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**Nuclear Non-Proliferation**



# Beyond Nuclear Non-Proliferation



This document is part of a project aimed to strengthen public awareness of the urgent need for nuclear abolition. The Tokyo-based Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Buddhist association, and the Inter Press Service global news agency initiated a media project in April 2009, which aimed to help shed light on the issue of nuclear abolition from the perspectives of civil society through the global media network of IPS and its partners such as the *Global Perspectives*. The journalistic articles, reproduced here, were published on the Internet and are available online at: [www.ipsnews.net/new\\_focus/nuclear/index.asp](http://www.ipsnews.net/new_focus/nuclear/index.asp) and [www.nuclearabolition.net](http://www.nuclearabolition.net)

# Imprint

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# NUCLEAR WEAPONS

## The World's Deadly Arsenal



Homepage

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your email

- Global Affairs
- Africa
- Asia-Pacific
  - Afghanistan
  - Iran
- Caribbean
  - Haiti
- Europe
  - Union in Diversity
- Latin America
- Mideast & Mediterranean
  - Iraq
  - Israel/Palestine
- North America
  - Obama: A New Era?
  - Neo-Cons
  - Bush's Legacy

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  - MDGs
  - City Voices
  - Corruption
- Civil Society
- Globalisation
- Environment
  - Energy Crunch
  - Climate Change
  - Tierramérica
- Human Rights

### IRAN: Sanctions' Effectiveness Widely Questioned

By Jim Lobe\*

WASHINGTON - While top U.S. officials touted the U.N. Security Council's approval Wednesday of a new sanctions resolution against Iran as a major diplomatic breakthrough, most nuclear and Iran specialists say it is unlikely to be effective and could prove counterproductive.

[MORE >>](#)

### Brazil, Turkey Defy U.S. on Nuke Vote Against Iran

By Thalif Deen

UNITED NATIONS - After several months of closed-door negotiations and shuttle diplomacy, the United States succeeded Wednesday in getting a new Security Council resolution - the fourth in a series - imposing a fresh set of sanctions penalising Iran for its nuclear programme.

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### Apartheid-Era Docs Shed Light on Israel's Worst-Kept Secret

By Hannah Rubenstein

NEW YORK - A U.S. author is standing by claims that Israel offered to sell nuclear warheads to South Africa during the apartheid regime, despite denials by Israel's then-defence minister, now-president Shimon Peres, that the accusation has "no basis in reality".

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### Experts Call Brazil-Turkey Deal with Iran a "First Step"

By Ali Gharib

WASHINGTON - A group of U.S. experts ranging from former top diplomats to non-proliferation specialists is praising the recent deal brokered by Brazil and Turkey on Iran's nuclear programme as a potential "first step" towards ratcheting down tensions between the West and the Islamic Republic.

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### Obama Seeks to Quiet Outrage over Gaza Flotilla Killings

By Jim Lobe\*

WASHINGTON - Amid nearly universal condemnation of Monday's pre-dawn Israeli assault in international waters on a flotilla carrying humanitarian and reconstruction aid bound for Gaza, the administration of President Barack Obama has steadfastly avoided assigning blame.

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### Gaza Aid Attack Complicates New Sanctions on Iran

By Barbara Slavin

WASHINGTON - Israel's lethal confrontation with pro-Palestinian activists in the Mediterranean is complicating U.S. strategy toward Iran and undermining the likelihood of a solid sanctions victory at the United Nations.

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RSS

At first it was the United States. Then came Russia, China, Britain and France. Everyone wanted their own atomic bombs. While Israel quietly nurtured its nuclear programme, in Asia, rivals India and Pakistan, and most recently North Korea, joined the global nuclear club. Now all eyes are on Iran, which according to the nations that already have these bombs, is hiding this killer science behind the doors of its nuclear energy industry.

95 percent of the nuclear arsenal is owned by the U.S. and Russia. With the arrival of U.S. President Barack Obama, there are renewed efforts to work towards non-proliferation. Are we heading towards a new "spirit of progressive multilateralism" - as British Prime Minister Gordon Brown says? Civil society groups are re-invigorating grassroots efforts towards full realisation of the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and promoting a new global and binding nuclear weapon abolition convention. Read IPS.

**Beyond Nuclear Non-Proliferation**  
**A Monthly Newsletter for**  
**Strengthening**  
**Awareness of Nuclear Abolition**

[www.ipsnews.net/new\\_focus/nuclear/index.asp](http://www.ipsnews.net/new_focus/nuclear/index.asp)



## MESSAGE FROM

# Roberto Savio

**Founder & President Emeritus  
Chairman, International Board of Trustees  
IPS-Inter Press Service**

The first decade of the new century does not give cause for much optimism. The old problems remain unsolved. Several more, intricate ones have been added to the list.

There is no improvement in the standoffs with Iran and North Korea. The Palestinian situation is getting worse as Israel openly defies Barack Obama, building new settlements on Arab land, knowing that no American administration will dare stand up to the pro-Israeli lobby.

While predictions about Iraq are difficult, this is not the case in Afghanistan where, according to the Pentagon, each soldier deployed costs one million dollars per year, in a war that is probably unwinnable and is likely to go on for at least five years. In addition, the new century has seen the emergence of problems previously unknown at the global level. We are in a phase of full-on globalization but do not know how to control it.

Fortunately, there are some positive signs on the horizon when it comes to nuclear arms race. Barack Obama is not sitting back since his landmark Prague speech in April 2009 in which he pleaded for a nuclear weapon free world. In that critical mission he is getting flanking support from Mikhail Gorbachev, who presides over the World Political Forum (WPF) that is guided by the tenet: "Unless we address the need to demilitarise international relations, reduce military budgets, put an end to the creation of new kinds of weapons and prevent weaponisation of outer space, all talk about a nuclear weapon free world will be just inconsequential rhetoric."

This in turn calls for awareness raising in the general public and the political elite – a task IPS is well placed to perform, by giving voice to the voiceless, by accompanying them from one base camp to another until the mountaintop is reached. As an organization that has grown over more than four-and-a-half decades providing contextualised information on development and environment, it is but natural that IPS provides news and analysis on issues related to nuclear disarmament and, in fact, abolition of nuclear weapons in the interest of a safe, secure and just world for citizens around the globe.

IPS shares this goal with the SGI and the media project launched in April 2009 is an important base camp in the climb up to sanguine optimism. ◆



## MESSAGE FROM

# Daisaku Ikeda

## President Soka Gakkai International

The choice that we face today is clear: a world free from nuclear weapons, or one endlessly threatened by them.

We can no longer afford to think of nuclear weapons abolition as a distant ideal. It is, rather, a pressing real-world necessity. Nuclear weapons, which instantly rob vast numbers of people of life and leave a multigenerational legacy of suffering, directly contravene people's most essential desires and aspirations. They are the weapons of ultimate inhumanity. Only with their complete elimination can we ensure the fulfilment of people's most heartfelt desire – to live lives of peace and happiness.

How can we bring this new reality into being? Ultimately, the world's citizens must raise their voices to the degree that they can transform the political and military logic of states. States are, after all, composed of a multitude of individuals; a profound change in the awareness of large numbers of individuals will bring about a change in the actions and attitudes of governments.

History teaches us that when a new consciousness comes to be widely shared among the people, advances that could not have been imagined just a short time earlier become possible. When the energies of ordinary citizens are focused and brought together, this constitutes a force capable of changing the world.

Herein lies the importance of education, in the broadest sense of the word. When people are empowered with accurate knowledge, they naturally understand the actions they need to take. Exchanging views among those close to us, we can learn together and search for the best and most effective forms of action.

The media have an especially important role to play in this educational process. By making objective information widely available and offering analysis from a range of standpoints, the media can bring into sharper focus the nature of issues and the actions to be taken to resolve them. IPS has taken as its special mission the work of "giving a voice to the voiceless." Soka Gakkai International is dedicated, from a civil society perspective, to building a culture of peace. It is a great joy to be able to collaborate with IPS in this project to provide a forum of dialogue to explore meaningful solutions to this most critical of issues. ◆



**PREFACE BY**

# **Mario Lubetkin**

**Director General  
IPS-Inter Press Service**

Information is an agent of change. Since its inception in 1964, IPS has therefore been *“giving a voice to the voiceless”*.

To fulfil this very important mission, IPS produces stories and analyses, which explain how events and global processes affect individuals and communities, especially the marginalised and voiceless.

IPS also builds an information bridge linking civil society, international institutions, policy-makers, donors and individual readers, to promote an ongoing dialogue about communication and development for a better world.

Because of its mission and conceptual approach, IPS has grown together with and systematically covered civil society, particularly its increasing international impact. Recognising the impact of globalisation on the South is another crucial insight that influences the IPS reports, builds capacity and disseminates news. This has made IPS a relevant actor within the overall development process and the main international news provider of organised civil society worldwide.

The first element of our communication strategy is the provision of independent news and editorial content. Indeed, among surveyed media practitioners (2007), civil society organizations, donors and individual readers, IPS is noted for the excellence of its editorial production, the integrity of its reporting, and its Southern focus.

We pride ourselves on being the only global news organization with over 70 percent of contributors permanently based in countries of the South. Most of our writers work from their own country or region of origin. Coordinated by a decentralized team of regional and senior editors working as part of the IPS regional entities, our diverse network of local stringers and correspondents is ideally suited to report on issues which affect the daily lives of the people they live amongst.

IPS editorial products deal with economic, social, political and cultural aspects of development, with particular emphasis on covering the IPS global thematic priorities. While project-related financing often provides us with invaluable resources to delve deeper into specific topics, we have made it a point, over these many years, to retain our editorial independence over the choice of issues to address and approaches to adopt, something *our* audiences appreciate.

The IPS-SGI media project is the first of its kind in so far as it focuses on raising awareness about the compelling need of nuclear disarmament leading to abolition of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, it is anchored in our mandate: how events and global processes affect individuals and communities. ♦

**PREFACE BY**

# **Hirotsugu Terasaki**

**Executive Director, Peace Affairs  
Soka Gakkai International**

Soka Gakkai International (SGI), one of the world's largest socially engaged Buddhist movements, has been promoting a campaign called the "People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition" since 2007, in collaboration with various like-minded international antinuclear movements.

For ordinary people who seek a peaceful and prosperous society, the existence of nuclear weapons can never under any circumstances be considered acceptable. One of the key focuses of our initiative is to find ways to ensure that the voices and perspectives of these ordinary citizens are heard by international society.

It was in the process of pursuing this initiative that we encountered the Inter Press Service. The news coverage by IPS is always imbued with perspectives that focus on the voices of the underprivileged and the marginalized, reporting from the viewpoint of civil society. IPS's news coverage stands out not only in terms of content, which is always sensitive to the existence of diverse opinions around the world, but also approach, constantly striving to convey the news to the largest range of people with a multilingual translation system covering almost all the major languages of the world.

SGI launched a joint media project with IPS on nuclear abolition in April 2009. Whereas the issue of nuclear weapons is often covered from the standpoint of national security alone, our emphasis is placed on covering the issue from the perspective of civil society, in line with the theme of our people's decade initiative. This project has been very fruitful so far.

We must never allow the global momentum toward nuclear abolition to falter or stop. Whether we will be able to develop the current momentum into an even larger groundswell hinges on whether civil society can gain a strong self-awareness as key players in the transformation of the era.

In this crucial year of 2010, we look forward to continuing our collaboration with IPS in our shared commitment to contributing to a culture of peace, and redouble our efforts toward the goal of nuclear abolition. ◆

# Contents – I

## MESSAGE FROM

### Roberto Savio

Founder & President Emeritus  
Chairman, International Board of Trustees,  
IPS-Inter Press Service

## MESSAGE FROM

### Daisaku Ikeda

President  
Soka Gakkai International

## PREFACE BY

Mario Lubetkin  
Director General IPS- Inter Press Service

## PREFACE BY

Hirotsugu Terasaki  
Executive Director, Peace Affairs,  
Soka Gakkai International

## Norway Seeks a New Push

By Ramesh Jaura in Oslo

## New Promise

By Ramesh Jaura in Rome

## German Peace Movement Gathers Momentum

By Julio Godoy in Berlin

## "Springtime of Hope"

Thalif Deen interviews Jayantha Dhanapala,  
Former UN Under-Secretary-General for  
Disarmament Affairs

06

## Back on the Agenda in Latin America

By Daniela Estrada in Santiago

07

## Mayors Gather at UN to Lobby against Nukes

By Matthew Berger in New York

8

## Groups Seek World Court Opinion

By Thalif Deen in New York

9

## Nuke Abolition More Urgent Than Ever

By Mikhail Gorbachev

12

## India: Opposition to 'Nuclearism' Builds Up

By Ranjit Devraj in New Delhi

14

## India-U.S.: Hurdles Aplenty Before Deal

By Ranjit Devraj in New Delhi

16

## Have no Nuclear Weapons, Just Share Them

By Wolfgang Kerler in Berlin

16

## France Ambiguous on Nuclear Disarmament

By Alecia D. McKenzie in Paris

## Mideast: Fine-Tuning the Cold War

By Jerrold Kessel and Pierre Klochendler  
in Jerusalem

19

## N-Britain Goes Uselessly to Sea

By Sanjay Suri in London

21

## Obama to Bolster Nuclear Disarmament

By Thalif Deen in New York

24

## U.S. Says No to Nukes, es to Conventional Arms

By Thalif Deen in New York

26

## Egypt Rejects U.S. Nuclear Umbrella

By Fareed Mahdy\* in Cairo

28

## Africa Joins the Nuke-free Club

By Fareed Mahdy in Cairo

30

## UN Conference Mulls over Nuke Abolition

By Taro Ichikawa in Tokyo

31

## Latin America: "The More Guns, the More Violence"

By Emilio Godoy in Mexico

33

## Obama Seeks UN Backing

By Thalif Deen in New York

35

37

39

41

43

45

48

50

52

53

# Contents – II

<b>Why We Should Abolish Nuclear Weapons</b> By Hiromichi Umebayashi in Tokyo	<b>56</b>	<b>Inter-religious Forum Calls for Nuclear Abolition</b> By Neena Bhandari	<b>72</b>	<b>Unified Approach Needed</b> By Jayantha Dhanapala in Kandy	<b>85</b>
<b>"Let Us Make Nuclear Abolition a Reality"</b> Ramesh Jaura interviews SGI President Daisaku Ikeda	<b>57</b>	<b>'Nuclear Energy Not a Solution to Climate Change'</b> Neena Bhandari interviews Dr Sue Wareham, proponent of a nuclear-free world	<b>74</b>	<b>Try with Nukes As with Mines</b> Chryso D'Angelo interviews Nobel Peace Prize Laureate JODY WILLIAMS	<b>86</b>
<b>Clinton Calls for Strengthened IAEA Powers</b> By Jim Lobe in Washington	<b>60</b>	<b>Disarmament: DPRK and U.S. Recommit to 2005 Joint Statement</b> By Eli Clifton in Washington	<b>76</b>	<b>Time for a Comprehensive N-Weapons Convention</b> By Dimity Hawkins in Melbourne	<b>88</b>
<b>Closer to Making Utopia Feasible?</b> By Taro Ichikawa in Hiroshima	<b>62</b>	<b>Nuclear Power 'Yes' – Nuclear Proliferation 'No'</b> By Clive Banerjee in Vienna	<b>77</b>	<b>Japan Pushes for Progress in U.S. Nuclear Review</b> By Jamshed Baruah in Berlin	<b>89</b>
<b>'France, U.S. Pushing Arabs into Nuclear Race'</b> By Fareed Mahdy in Istanbul	<b>65</b>	<b>ICNND Spreads Tainted Joy</b> By Taro Ichikawa in Tokyo	<b>78</b>	<b>Editor's Note</b>	<b>91</b>
<b>Toward a Nuke-Free Germany?</b> By Ramesh Jaura in Berlin	<b>67</b>	<b>From Simple Anti-War Agenda to Expansive Peace Initiatives</b> Mutsuko Murakami interviews Ikuro Anzai, honorary director of the Kyoto Museum for World Peace	<b>81</b>		
<b>It's Still "You First"</b> By Haider Rizvi in New York	<b>68</b>	<b>Iran Uses Fear of Covert Nuclear Sites to Deter Attack</b> By Gareth Porter* in Washington	<b>83</b>		
<b>U.S.-Japan Accord: Seeking a Nuke Free World</b> By Ernest Corea in Washington	<b>70</b>				



# Norway Seeks a New Push

By Ramesh Jaura in Oslo



Norway's foreign affairs minister Jonas Gahr Støre (*left in picture*) has called for giving new priority to nuclear disarmament that has been assigned to oblivion since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall not only brought to an end the division of Berlin but also paved the way for unification of Germany and the end of the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

"Good governance and human rights took priority over disarmament because the nuclear threat was perceived as having disappeared," the minister told IPS. "With the new U.S. Administration there is a momentum to move the disarmament process forward," Støre said. "It is not often you see a U.S. President calling for steps to reach a world free of nuclear weapons."

The world is at a crossroads now, he said. On the one hand nuclear disarmament needs are pressing because the non-proliferation challenges are compelling. On the other hand opportunities and possibilities are perhaps greater than they have been for a decade, Støre said.

Earlier, speaking at the opening of an exhibition on nuclear abolition Apr. 15 in Oslo's city hall, Støre said his country would exert all its influence to move nuclear disarmament to centre stage.

Together with Germany, Norway raised this at the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) summit earlier this month in Strasbourg (France) and Kehl (Germany), Støre told IPS. The NATO declaration of Apr. 4 emphasizes that "arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation" will continue to make an important contribution to peace, security, and stability.

NATO allies reaffirmed that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains important and that they will contribute constructively to achieving a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT review conference.

Opening the exhibition titled 'From a culture of violence to a culture of peace: transforming the human spirit', Norway's former prime minister Kjell Magne Bondevik said: "We must never forget that the NPT does not give the five nuclear weapon states (Britain, France, Russia, the U.S. and China) the right to retain their special status indefinitely." ➔

## NORWAY SEEKS A NEW PUSH

Bondevik said a five-state summit for nuclear disarmament with the participation of the UN Secretary-General should be convened regularly to draw up a roadmap of specific measures to fulfil their disarmament obligations. "Non-proliferation and disarmament must only be steps towards the only meaningful goal - a world free of nuclear weapons," he said.

Bondevik was prime minister 1997 to 2000, and from 2001 to 2005, making him the Nordic country's longest serving non-Socialist prime minister since World War II. In January 2006 he founded the Oslo Centre for Peace and Human Rights that he has been heading since.

Bondevik said it was promising that there were signals of new talks between the U.S. and Russia - which between them account for 95 percent of the world's nuclear arsenal - on a new legally binding agreement to replace START 1 (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) that expires in December this year. Bondevik's remarks were in line with those of Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Tokyo-based Buddhist association Soka Gakkai International (SGI) that has members in 192 countries and territories.

SGI, which organized the exhibition together with five leading Norwegian civil society organizations, considers the NPT review conference next year crucial to nuclear disarmament as a first step towards nuclear abolition.

The exhibition that is open until Apr. 22 is supported by No to Nuclear Weapons (NTA), Norwegian Physicians Against Nuclear Weapons (NLA) affiliated with the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, the Norwegian Pugwash Committee, the Norwegian Atlantic Community (NAC) and the United Association of Norway.

SGI vice-president Hiromasa Ikeda said the exhibition was intended to "set out the broad vision of a culture of peace, predicated on the concept of human security, and to encourage people to take action towards its realisation."

"The current shift towards nuclear abolition in the international political arena, where such a vision has so far been seen as unrealistic, provides a vital opportunity," SGI office of peace affairs executive director Hirotsugu Terasaki told IPS.

Good faith efforts on the part of the nuclear weapon states are essential if confidence in the NPT is to be restored, former Norwegian prime minister Bondevik told IPS.

"Only then will it be possible to win the trust of countries outside the NPT regime and obtain commitments on freezing and dismantling nuclear

weapons development programmes."

The current financial crisis may facilitate the disarmament process, said Steffen Kongstad, director-general at Norway's foreign affairs ministry.

"The public may start questioning the spending of billions of dollars to maintain a fleet of weapons which is

envisioned never to be used," Kongstad told a seminar accompanying the exhibition.

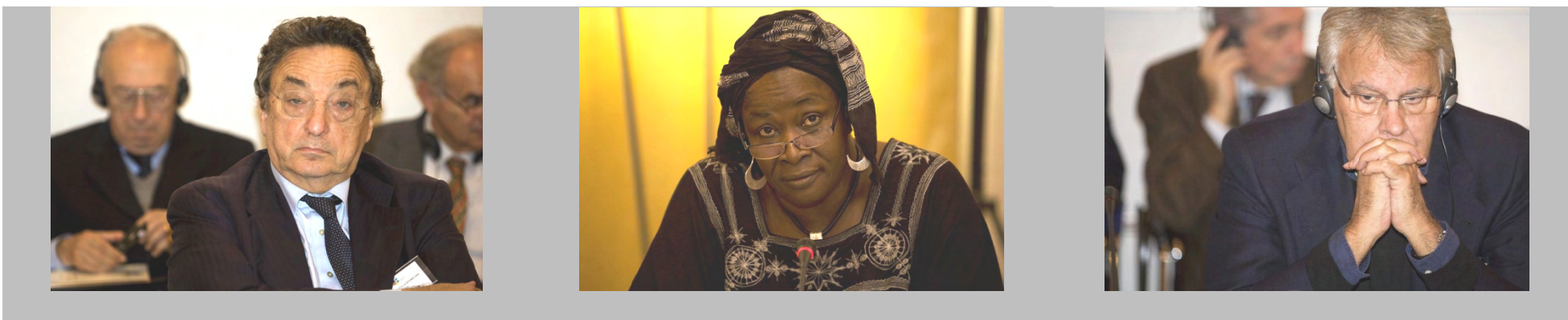
"The mere existence of these weapons represents in itself severe security challenges. One cannot distinguish between good or bad nuclear weapons," he said.

Kongstad cautioned against complacency despite some helpful signs from the U.S. and Russia. "We know that the nuclear lobby is still strong in key countries. We must also recognize that there are other actors than the U.S. in the game."

Political pressure from voters, the civil society and academics is essential in order to achieve tangible results, he said. This worked with the Mine Ban Convention in 1997 and the Convention on Cluster Munitions last year. [IPS | April 16, 2009]



"From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace: Transforming the Human Spirit" exhibition at the Oslo City Hall Gallery



# New Promise

By Ramesh Jaura in Rome

Leading supporters of disarmament see new hope arising from the announcement by the U.S. and Russian presidents that they are willing to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with a new one.

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and U.S. President Barack Obama made that announcement in London Apr. 1 on the eve of the G20 summit. "We committed our two countries to achieving a nuclear free world," the leaders said jointly. Russia and the United States possess about 95 percent of nuclear weapons.

The who's who of the disarmament world agreed to take that impetus forward at a conference held in Rome Apr. 16-17. The Conference on Overcoming Nuclear Dangers was attended by 70 former and current government officials and experts from about 20 countries.

The announcement by Obama and Medvedev "will give new impetus to disarmament and arms control, and certainly strengthen our common effort for a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT (Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty) Review Conference," said Foreign Minister Franco Frattini of Italy, which co-sponsored the conference. "Other nuclear powers should follow the lead of the U.S. and Russia."

Full compliance with disarmament and non-proliferation treaties, "first and foremost the NPT, is an essential condition of real progress towards the achievement of our stated goals," he said. But the road is littered with multiple obstacles, warned Mikhail Gorbachev, who was president of what was the Soviet Union between 1985 and 1991. He had signed START with then U.S. president Ronald Reagan.

Gorbachev, who presides over the World Political Forum (WPF), urged the U.S. and Russia to work towards removing the hurdles. "Unless we address the need to demilitarize international relations, reduce military budgets, put an end to the creation of new kinds of weapons and prevent weaponisation of outer space, all talk about a nuclear weapon free world will be just inconsequential rhetoric," he said.

The WPF, an international NGO founded in Piedmont (Italy) by Gorbachev, organized the conference along with the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI).

"We serve as a meeting point for cultures, religions, political leaders and civil society - an open forum where analysis of the issue of interdependence provides a framework for the building of a new world political architecture," WPF's director of external relations Roberto Savio told IPS. ➡

The U.S.-based NTI is co-chaired by Ted Turner of CNN and former senator Sam Nunn. It seeks to strengthen global security by reducing the risk of use and preventing the spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

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The conference threw up the idea of "base camps" leading up to a nuclear-free mountaintop. Such base camps, that would serve as platforms to design the best way up towards a world free of nukes, and supportive measures in other areas of arms control and security cooperation, can help usher in a world free of nuclear weapons, according to a joint statement by Gorbachev, George P. Schultz, the U.S. secretary of state 1982-1989 under Reagan, and Frattini.

The conference statement says there is growing recognition - both inside and outside of governments - of the need to embrace the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and the urgent steps necessary to overcome nuclear dangers.

"The current shift towards nuclear abolition in the international political arena, where such a vision has so far been seen as unrealistic, provides a vital opportunity," Hirosugu Terasaki, executive director of peace affairs at the Tokyo-based Buddhist association Soka Gakkai International (SGI) told IPS.

SGI launched a 'People's Decade' in September 2007 along with international anti-nuclear movements such as the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), a campaign initiated by the International Physicians for the Prevention of

Nuclear War (IPPNW), a federation of medical professionals in 60 countries that was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for 1985.

"The aim of the People's Decade is to increase the number of people who reject nuclear weapons. Ordinary citizens and civil society must be the protagonists, creating a groundswell of demand for nuclear abolition that will influence decision makers," Terasaki said.



SGI was one of three civil society organisations that took part in the Rome conference; the other two being the Italian Peace Roundtable - a network that unites more than 1,500 civil society organisations and local authorities, and the Global Security Institute (GSI), a U.S.-based group that aims to strengthen international cooperation and security based on the rule of law, with a particular focus on nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

"We have a situation where chemical weapons and biological weapons are condemned universally but nuclear weapons, which are even more horrific than biological or chemical, are allegedly acceptable in the hands of nine countries (Britain, France, Russia, China, Canada and the United States as well as India, Pakistan and North Korea). This is incoherent and unsustainable," GSI president Jonathan Granoff told IPS.

"The only solution is to either allow all countries to use these terrific devices - clearly unacceptable - or to universally ban them," he said.

"They are not over-ambitious in saying that we are going to achieve this in five years time or so because they know they have to create a climate of opinion and then the principal players - U.S. and Russia - have to be persuaded to act and then gradually we go towards the summit which is ridding the world of nuclear weapons," India's former foreign secretary and disarmament expert Lalit Mansingh told IPS.

**[IPS | April 24, 2009]**

# German Peace Movement Gathers Momentum

By Julio Godoy in Berlin

It is indeed an irony of history. The U.S.-led NATO's decision to station nuclear weapons across Western Europe gave birth and clout to the German peace movement. Thirty years later, it is back in the news, this time vigorously campaigning for U.S. President Barack Obama's proposals.

The German Peace Movement acquired a mass character when NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) took a double-track decision in Washington in December 1979, offering its rival military bloc Warsaw Pact a mutual limitation of medium-range and intermediate-range ballistic missiles, combined with the threat that in case of disagreement NATO would deploy more middle range nuclear weapons in Western Europe.

Following the NATO decision to station 572 nuclear warheads (Pershing II and cruise missiles) thousands of nuclear munitions were deployed on West German territory alone, all targeting cities and civil and military facilities across the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. At the same time, West German territory was itself one major target of the Soviet SS-20 nuclear missiles, some of them stationed in East Germany.

In the years that followed, especially in the early 1980s, hundreds of thousands of West German citizens regularly protested against NATO and against the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons in the country.

But nobody among the German peace activists would have believed that one day they would share views on nuclear disarmament with a U.S. president.

In a speech in the Czech capital Prague April 5, Obama pleaded for a world free of nuclear weapons. He called the thousands of atomic weapons spread across the world "the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War. To achieve a global ban on nuclear testing, my administration will immediately and aggressively pursue US ratification of the comprehensive Test Ban Treaty," Obama said. "So after more than five decades of talks, it is time for the testing of nuclear weapons to finally be banned," he added.

Marching in Obama's slip stream this Easter, thousands of Germans took again to the streets. On Good Friday, in the country's financial capital Frankfurt alone, some 20,000 people came together to call for nuclear abolition. In dozens of other German cities also demonstrations took place. The Easter marches have been traditionally the yearly climax of the peace movement.

In Frankfurt, psychoanalyst Horst-Eberhard Richter, co-founder of the German bureau of the International physicians for the prevention of nuclear war (IPPNW), told peace marchers:

"The peace movement comes back not to demonstrate against Obama, but to support him. Then the reversal of the global nuclear intimidation and towards the construction of a human peace policy is such a big step forward, that it needs support from the entire world." In an interview with this correspondent, Jens-Peter Steffen, of the IPPNW, said that Obama's call for nuclear disarmament would "help the boost the popularity of our demands."

The IPPNW, founded in 1980 by U.S. and Soviet cardiologists concerned with the horrors of a nuclear war, is a worldwide grouping with some 60 national medical organizations, which campaigns for the abolition of all nuclear weapons.

The IPPNW German bureau has some 8,000 members and is the largest peace organisation in the country.

The NATO double-track decision of 1979, conceived in Washington under U.S. president Jimmy Carter, and implemented under President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s, made the West German territory home to thousands of nuclear warheads.

Given that Germany was also the target of Russian and French middle-range nuclear weapons, the possibility of a nuclear war being fought on the country's territory raised awareness among ordinary Germans of the obliterating dangers of such arsenals. ☞



## GERMAN PEACE MOVEMENT

When the German government of the time, led by the Social Democratic (SPD) chancellor Helmut Schmidt, ratified the NATO double-track decision, and allowed for the deployment of nuclear war heads on German territory, hundreds of thousands of Germans marched throughout West Germany to denounce the deadly logic of the nuclear arms race.

In 1981, during the so-called Easter March, more than 300,000 people in the then West German capital Bonn peacefully protested against the double-track decision. Soon after, Chancellor Schmidt who had lost support for the decision in his own party was removed in a constructive vote of no-confidence in the German Bundestag.

The conservative Christian Democratic Union's (CDU's) Helmut Kohl took over as Chancellor. The SPD spent 16 years in the opposition, its share of electoral power enduringly mined by the emergence of the Green party, itself rooted in the peace movement. When U.S. President Reagan visited Bonn in 1983, half a million Germans took to the streets of Bonn, to show their discontent.

But since the fall of the Berlin Wall and end of the Cold War, especially during the late 1990s and early 2000s, the German peace movement appeared to have reached terminal exhaustion. After German unification and the dismantling of the Soviet block, the horrors of nuclear war might have appeared to many as a phantom of a distant past. In those years, Easter marches were negligible demonstrations, without any influence whatsoever in national politics.

And yet, Germany continued to be home to dozens of nuclear warheads – it still is. Although the exact dimension of the nuclear arsenal deployed in Germany remains classified, the German bureau of the IPPNW estimates that some 20 nuclear bombs of the type B61 are still stored in Buechel, a military base located some 500 kilometres southwest of Berlin, near the border with Belgium and Luxembourg.

Buechel has the capacity to store up to 44 nuclear warheads. Some 1,700 German soldiers learn there the handling of this arsenal, in the framework of the so-called nuclear sharing policy, the NATO's policy of nuclear deterrence, which involves member countries without nuclear weapons of their own in the planning for the use of

nuclear weapons by NATO. Other than Germany, Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands host U.S. nuclear weapons. According to IPPNW, all in all, there some 300 U.S. nuclear bombs spread across European NATO members. Each of these bombs can have a detonation power of up to 170 kilotons – for comparison, the bomb that destroyed the Japanese city of Hiroshima in August 1945, and killed up to 200,000 people, had a detonation power of 12.5 kilotons.

Meanwhile, the present Russian nuclear arsenal might consist of up to 7,000 middle-range nuclear warheads, although some 5,000 of these bombs are considered useless. All these middle range nuclear weapons, both the NATO's and the Russian, are completely unregulated and vulnerable to theft.

Even though this year's Easter peace demonstrations were in Germany by a far cry smaller than those of the 1980s, the marches, thanks to Obama's nuclear abolition plans, represented a rebirth of the movement. So much, that even mainstream German politicians, who until recently saw nuclear sharing as a permanent fact of life, are discovering the charm of nuclear disarmament.

German foreign minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, SPD's is one of them. In interviews with German media, Steinmeier urged the U.S. government to include the nuclear weapons deployed in Germany in its disarmament plans. "These weapons are obsolete," Steinmeier told the German weekly Der Spiegel.

Last December, in a report for the U.S. defence ministry, a U.S. expert commission concluded that the B61 nuclear bombs deployed across Europe are "useless, military speaking". The commission also underlined the disproportionate costs associated with maintaining this nuclear arsenal ready for use.

Despite Steinmeier's straightforward words in favour of nuclear disarmament in Germany, the German coalition government appears divided on the issue. Chancellor Angela Merkel, a Christian Democrat, said last March during a debate in the German parliament, that her government continues to adhere to the nuclear sharing policy, because it "would guarantee the German government influence in the NATO in the particularly sensible subject" of nuclear weapons policy. ☺

## GERMAN PEACE MOVEMENT

On yet another recent occasion, during the Munich security conference early February, Merkel said that "we ... adhere to the principle of the nuclear deterrence." German observers believe that in this matter Merkel's party, the CDU follows the argumentative line defined by the country's military command.

In fact, along with the co-ruling SPD, all opposition parties, left and right, in the German parliament (Bundestag) support the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from German territory: Both the Green party, which has its roots in the peace movement of the 1980s, and the Left Party plead for nuclear disarmament. So does the Liberal Democratic Party (FDP, after its German name).

In fact, immediately after Obama's speech in Prague, FDP leader Guido Westerwelle urged the German government to "start negotiations with the NATO to withdraw the nuclear weapons from our territory. These weapons do not belong here," Westerwelle said in an interview with German public television.

Despite the vocal majority of political leaders, the withdrawal of the NATO nuclear weapons from German territory is not expected to be discussed in the Bundestag this year. In their coalition government pact, the SPD and the CDU specifically agreed that this withdrawal would not be proposed to vote in the Bundestag.

But the government's mandate is coming to an end – and activists for disarmament hope that the subject would form the core of the campaign towards the general elections scheduled for next September.

IPPNW's Steffen told this correspondent that Steinmeier's sudden public position in favour of nuclear disarmament is already part of the electoral campaign – Steinmeier is the SPD chancellor candidate.

"Numerous opinion polls have shown along the years that a consistent, large majority of German voters of some 75 percent support the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the country," Steffen said. Obviously, Steinmeier wants to politically benefit from this popularity of nuclear disarmament.

Despite the growing likelihood that the NATO nuclear weapons shall be withdrawn from German territory, the German peace movement is aware of the difficulties facing nuclear disarmament worldwide.



Frank-Walter Steinmeier | Wikimedia Commons

"Countries like Pakistan, India, North Korea and Israel, which possess the nuclear bomb, can only be persuaded to renounce it through global, difficult negotiations, under leadership of the United Nations," Steffen said.

"To that end, a new international nuclear disarmament pact is needed, and the UN appears to be the only body capable of leading negotiations towards this end, and carrying out an effective monitoring of disarmament," Steffen said

Such a treaty should include the nuclear arsenals of the five members of the UN Security Council – other than the U.S. and Russia, France, Britain and China are officially nuclear powers. The Leftist German opposition wants the European Union to support Obama's call for nuclear disarmament by declaring itself a "nuclear weapons free zone," as Wolfgang Gehrcke, in charge of foreign policy in the Bundestag group of the Left party, put it.

But, despite the sudden enthusiasm for nuclear disarmament, neither France nor Britain are yet willing to relinquish their nuclear arsenals. Gehrcke's proposal would therefore remain wishful thinking. **[IDN-InDepthNews | April 30, 2009]**



# "Springtime of Hope"

## Thalif Deen interviews Jayantha Dhanapala, Former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs

When he addressed a massive gathering in the Czech capital of Prague last month, U.S. President Barack Obama made a historic statement pledging that his country will take "concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons."

That speech, which included a call for a new strategic arms reduction treaty with Russia and an end to nuclear weapons testing, will resonate throughout a two-week meeting of a preparatory committee for the 2010 review conference on the four-decade-old Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), which deals with halting the spread of existing nuclear weapons technology, dismantling nuclear arsenals, and the right to peacefully use nuclear technology.

Jayantha Dhanapala, one of the world's foremost authorities on nuclear disarmament, currently in New York to attend the meeting which concludes May 15, is cautiously optimistic about the state of the nuclear world.

"We are certainly in a springtime of hope after the dark winter of discontent in the disarmament field," said Dhanapala, a former UN under-secretary-general for disarmament affairs and president of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs.

In an interview with UN Bureau Chief Thalif Deen, he said the rhetoric of the Prague speech by President Obama will have to be matched by action on the issues identified.

"At the same time we must not underestimate the opposition to these actions, and civil society should support the [U.S.] president while other countries - especially the nuclear weapon states - must also play their own role in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation," Dhanapala said.

In his Prague speech, Obama warned that while the Cold War between the United States and Russia has disappeared, the thousands of nuclear weapons have not.

"No nuclear weapon war was fought between the United States and the (former) Soviet Union, but generations lived with the knowledge that their world could be erased in a single flash of light," he added.

Obama has also pledged to pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and to put an end to the testing of nuclear weapons.

Dhanapala said the Obama administration and its supporters "must work hard to make the case for ratification in the U.S. Senate, which will require 67 senators voting for it." Excerpts from the interview follow.

### **IPS: Do you think there will be any breakthrough on CTBT or fissile ban in a changed environment?**

JAYANTHA DHANAPALA: While U.S. ratification will provide a major impetus, let us not forget that eight other countries must either sign or ratify the treaty for it to enter into force.

The main reason why the CTBT was always regarded as a litmus test for nuclear disarmament was because with no test explosions, new generations of nuclear weapons, new designs and new capabilities were effectively halted. Any bargain which undermines this would be a Faustian one, which will be rejected by the disarmament community.

On the fissile material ban, the U.S. policy shift on seeking a verifiable treaty should open the way for the Conference on Disarmament to start negotiating a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) at long last. ➡



## "SPRINGTIME OF HOPE"

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**IPS: Will there be any significant developments in advancing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)?**

JD: The NPT is an inherently discriminatory treaty which is not sustainable as long as unequal obligations are cast on non-nuclear weapon states vis-a-vis nuclear weapon states, and the latter are allowed to retain their weapons.

Every five years the nuclear weapon states wake up at the time of the Review Conference and seek to paper over the cracks among the parties.

In 2010, the Review Conference faces fresh challenges because of the unresolved problems over North Korea and Iran, the conclusion of the Indo-U.S. nuclear co-operation deal and the failure of the nuclear weapon states to reduce and eliminate their weapons.

The new atmosphere created by the Obama administration with specific steps taken in the next year may help avert the disaster that took place in (the Review Conference in) 2005 (over a proposed agenda).

**IPS: What of the ultimate goal of a nuclear weapons-free world?**

JD: The incrementalist approach of those who see global zero for nuclear weapons as a mirage-like "ultimate goal" is increasingly being challenged by those who want a Nuclear Weapon Convention negotiated to outlaw nuclear weapons in the same way that biological and chemical weapons were delegitimised.

The former approach will only lead to more proliferation and greater dangers of terrorist groups acquiring nuclear weapons. The Nuclear Posture Review planned by the Obama administration must make a doctrinal change so that we eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in national security leading to global security without these weapons. [IPS | May 4, 2009]

# Back on the Agenda in Latin America

By Daniela Estrada in Santiago

Over the last few days, the Chilean capital has hosted two very different activities that, however, had a common objective: promoting global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

The first regional meeting of the independent International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND) took place in Santiago May 1-3, with the support of the Latin American Faculty of Social Sciences (FLACSO).

The members of the ICNND met with Chilean President Michelle Bachelet May 4.

The president also met on Apr. 28 with Spanish activist Rafael de la Rubia, spokesperson for the World March for Peace and Nonviolence, which will visit 300 cities in 90 countries between October 2009 and January 2010.

De la Rubia told the press in Chile that the global march will set out on Oct. 2 from Wellington, New Zealand and will end on Jan. 2, 2010 at the foot of Mount Aconcagua in Argentina.

A group of activists will make the complete three-month 160,000-km march, which will include smaller marches by demonstrators along the way.

"Marches will be held in every city," de la Rubia explained. "In one place, it will be three kilometers, in another, seven or 15. The rest will be bus, boat or train rides."

Bachelet was the first head of state to explicitly declare her support for the World March for Peace and Nonviolence.

The question of nuclear disarmament has gained a new international prominence in recent months.

The presidents of the United States and Russia - which have 95 percent of the existing 26,000 nuclear warheads - released a joint statement on Apr. 1 committing themselves to restart negotiations on a new treaty that would limit and reduce the number of U.S. and Russian nuclear warheads.

Presidents Barack Obama and Dimitry Medvedev announced negotiations "to pursue new and verifiable reductions in our strategic offensive arsenals in a step-by-step process, beginning by replacing the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with a new, legally-binding treaty."

The announcement was widely hailed, by the European Parliament in particular.

But just a few days later, on Apr. 5, North Korea, which has acknowledged having a nuclear development programme, launched what it described as an experimental communications satellite into orbit, which according to the United States and its allies was a long-range missile capable of reaching the state of Alaska.

The incident was a reminder of the risk that the number of nuclear weapon states could grow, or that nuclear arms fall into the hands of terrorist groups or a rogue state.

Politicians, experts and activists agree that the change in administration in the United States opened up new possibilities for making effective progress towards gradual nuclear disarmament.

That is precisely the aim of the World March for Peace and Nonviolence and the ICNND, a high-level initiative launched by the Australian and Japanese governments in September 2008 to revitalize global disarmament efforts.

The ICNND is co-chaired by former Australian foreign minister Gareth Evans and former Japanese foreign minister Yoriko Kawaguchi. ➔

## BACK ON THE AGENDA IN LATIN AMERICA



Australia is a large global supplier of uranium, and Japan is the only country to have suffered a nuclear attack (the atomic bombs dropped by the U.S. on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.)

The ICNND commissioners include former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000), former Norwegian prime minister Gro Harlem Brundtland (1981, 1986-1989 and 1990-1996), former U.S. defence secretary William Perry and former Chinese United Nations ambassador Wang Yingfan.

The commission, which plans to publish a report at the end of the year, decided to hold its first regional meeting in Latin America because of the region's "political and moral leadership" in the area of nuclear disarmament, Gareth Evans said in the Chilean capital.

The world's first nuclear weapon free zone was established in Latin America and the Caribbean in 1967, under the Treaty of Tlatelolco. All 33 countries in the region are parties to the Treaty, which was reaffirmed in 2003. The other nuclear weapon free zones are Africa, Southeast Asia and the South Pacific.

Because of its leadership in that area, Evans urged Latin America to play a more active role in the debates on the next Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to be held in May 2010. The third session of the conference preparatory committee is taking place May 4-15 in New York.

The NPT recognizes only five countries as nuclear weapon states: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States – the five countries that had such technology when the treaty was signed in 1968, which are also the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

The aim of the treaty, which has 189 signatories, is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament.

But today, the "nuclear club" also includes India, Pakistan and Israel, while North Korea is widely believed to have nuclear weapons and Iran is suspected of having an active nuclear weapons programme.

The 2010 NPT review conference should strengthen several aspects of the treaty, especially the compliance verification process, Evans, co-chair of the ICNND, told IPS.

An appropriate mechanism is required to bring a country before the UN Security Council and to achieve a swift response, in case a country is doing something that it should not be doing, under the treaty, he said.

He also called for expanding the institutional capacity of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and providing it with more resources.

In Evans' view, nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and the expansion of nuclear energy are issues that need to be tackled together, because the lines separating them are blurry.

It is not possible to get very far on non-proliferation without serious commitments on disarmament, said Evans, who stressed the importance of getting the nuclear states to sign a serious commitment in 2010. ➔

## BACK ON THE AGENDA IN LATIN AMERICA



ICNND Co-chair Prof Gareth Evans with IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano.  
Credit: ICNND

The ICNND's short-term agenda – for the next four years – also includes ratification and implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the completion of negotiations for a draft fissile material cutoff treaty in Geneva.

It would also be important to resolve the specific problems of Iran and North Korea, said Evans.

Although he acknowledged that it is a "very ambitious four-year agenda," the former Australian foreign minister said that with the political momentum generated by the new U.S. leadership, "I think much more is possible."

The ICNND hopes that nuclear weapons will have been reduced to a minimum in the world by 2025.

Evans, who has visited each of the world's nuclear-armed nations, said the strong support for the commission is "quite interesting," because there have been many previous commissions and many previous reports.

The co-chair of the ICNND said he believes that if the commissioners are able to produce a report that is pragmatic and realistic, that takes into consideration the political and security problems of countries and does not only speak in abstract terms about grandiose visions, and that has dates, targets and action plans, the initiative could be "quite influential."

Because these issues are complex and difficult, the pressure has to come from three directions, said Evans: first, from up above, from the United States and Russia, because they have 95 percent of all existing nuclear weapons. Nothing will happen without leadership, he stressed.

But pressure must also come from peer groups, from governments, including those of Latin America, which have an important role to play, he added. Furthermore, it must come from below, from civil society and NGOs. All of these activities send out important messages, he maintained. **[IPS | May 4, 2009]**

# Mayors Gather at UN to Lobby against Nukes

By Matthew Berger in New York

The issue of nuclear disarmament being discussed with new vigour in the halls of the UN as the third and final preparatory committee leading up to the 2010 review conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) meets over the next two weeks.

Mayors for Peace, an international network of local officials, held an event Tuesday as part of the NPT preparatory sessions to promote its 2020 Vision Campaign calling for the abolition of all nuclear weapons by the year 2020.

They are just one voice of many calling for concrete, time-based disarmament, but they hold the unique position of representing the world's cities - the potential targets of nuclear attacks.

The Mayors for Peace gathering is one of many side events and comes at a time when there is growing talk of abolition of nuclear arsenals, a goal long viewed by many policy-makers as admirable but unrealistic.

Speaking to the gathered mayors and diplomats via a video message, Hans Blix, former head of the International Atomic Energy Agency and of the commission that searched for WMDs in Iraq in 2002, said, "It is a very timely moment that you are meeting."

He described the disarmament process as coming out of "a period of sleep-walking or, even worse, sliding backwards."

"There was a moment that was missed in the 1990s," he continued, "and now we have a new opportunity."

This idea that the time is ripe for a stronger move toward disarmament was a theme in almost all the speeches. The election of U.S. President Barack Obama and, especially, his speech in Prague last month calling for "a world without nuclear weapons", seem to be the main reasons behind this renewed optimism.

Yano Miyako, a survivor of the 1945 U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima, summed up this sentiment: "Before we could not expect much, but now, yes, we can - because of President Obama's speech."

"I believe that our majority voice has reached President Obama," said Tadatoshi Akiba, mayor of Hiroshima and president of Mayors for Peace.

On May 1, 53 new cities joined Mayors for Peace. It now has 2,870 member cities from 134 countries and regions.

The main work of the 2020 Vision Campaign entails collecting the signatures of local officials on the "Cities Appeal in support of the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Protocol". This protocol would be complementary to the NPT and would solidify national commitments to the "good faith" move toward disarmament required by Article VI of the treaty, which says "each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith"

on measures relating to disarmament. John Burroughs, executive director of the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy, spoke about the legal implications of this phrase. "'Good faith' means parties are under an obligation to conduct themselves so that negotiations are meaningful. It is critical to the disarmament process," he said.

Akiba echoed this, saying "'in good faith' is not only a legal term but a moral imperative."

Change has not yet definitively come to disarmament, though. "Now we're seeing some movements on U.S.-Russia relations, on fissile materials, but not as yet on global reduction of nuclear weapons," said Burroughs.

There are over 26,000 nuclear warheads in the world today, 95 percent of them in the U.S. and Russia. As long as these weapons exist, Mayors for Peace argues, they might be used, and the only way to prevent this is to abolish them.

If these weapons were used, said Sergio Duarte, the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, "They would most likely be used in cities." Local officials would thus be the main ones responsible for providing emergency and medical services.

The role of local officials in the geopolitical arena of disarmament might be called into question, but, as Blix said in his video message, "more than half the world's people live in cities." ↻

Mayor Donald Plusquellic of Akron, Ohio, mentioned how U.S. mayors had to play a central role in coordinating responses following the Sep. 11, 2001, attacks and have taken action at the local level to address climate change when ratification of the Kyoto Protocol faltered at the national level in the U.S.

"Mayors have to justify just travelling to conferences like this when there are so many pressing issues at home, but I really think this is a pressing issue of the day," he said.

Akiba summed up the rationale for the role of cities: "It is the cities that suffer the result of nuclear catastrophes."

Cities also have a key role in providing their citizens opportunities to express their support for disarmament. Akiba mentioned a specific baseball game in Hiroshima dedicated to Mayors for Peace in which all the fans held up signs in support of their disarmament campaign.

However, Duarte cautioned, "The most important single factor that will influence this outcome is, as always, the political will of nation-states."

This August will mark 64 years since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but the effects are still being felt. Yuki, the 12-year-old granddaughter of a bombing survivor, spoke to the gathering: "When I was eight I was attacked by a strange stomachache, and was in the hospital for two weeks."

Her grandmother then said, "Rather than waiting for other countries to give up their nuclear weapons before we give up ours, we must have the courage to take action. What I want people to understand is that what happened in Hiroshima and Nagasaki is not in the past but an opportunity for the future."

The NPT requires a review conference every five years to evaluate the implementation of the treaty's articles. The final count of the Cities Appeal signatures will take place next year at the 2010 NPT Review Conference at UN headquarters in New York. **[IPS | May 6, 2009]**

There are over 26,000 nuclear warheads in the world today, 95 percent of them in the U.S. and Russia. As long as these weapons exist, Mayors for Peace argues, they might be used, and the only way to prevent this is to abolish them.



# Groups Seek World Court Opinion

By Thalif Deen in New York



Christopher Weeramantry, a former ICJ judge and president of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA),  
Credit: Wikimedia Commons

A coalition of international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) is seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) - the second in 13 years - on the legality and use of nuclear weapons.

Christopher Weeramantry, a former ICJ judge and president of the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA), says more than a decade has passed since the Court unanimously declared that nuclear weapons have the "potential to destroy all civilisation and the entire ecosystem of the planet."

Based in The Hague, Netherlands, the Court is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations. Its 15 judges are elected for nine-year terms by the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Although the ICJ pronounced against nuclear weapons, there has been a continued readiness not only to develop them but also to maintain existing arsenals.

The five declared nuclear powers are the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia, while the three undeclared powers are India, Pakistan and Israel. Both Iran and North Korea are on the sidelines.

The July 1996 opinion said that "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." The organizations seeking a new ICJ advisory opinion include IALANA and the International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School.

The move is being backed by the Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy (LCNP) and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War.

"Given the failure to act and ongoing debates about what conduct is legally required for states to meet the good faith negotiation obligation, it is time to return to the Court to obtain guidance for the disarmament enterprise and to ensure that the legal obligation is effectively implemented," says a legal memorandum submitted by the groups.

The 192-member UN General Assembly, however, would have to adopt a resolution asking the ICJ to provide an opinion. This is what was done for the first opinion on nuclear weapons back in 1996.

John Burroughs, executive director of LCNP, told IPS the first opinion has been far more influential than is commonly realized.

There is very wide acceptance of the ICJ's unanimous conclusion that Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) requires states to pursue and to conclude negotiations on complete nuclear disarmament. ↻

## GROUPS SEEK WORLD COURT OPINION

"That is, there is not only a duty to make best efforts through negotiation, there is a duty to succeed through negotiations in eliminating nuclear arsenals," he added. In votes on the annual General Assembly resolution following up on the ICJ resolution, there have also been votes on separate paragraphs welcoming the ICJ conclusion regarding the nuclear disarmament obligation.

Burroughs said almost all countries, including India and Pakistan, have voted for that paragraph. Only three countries have voted against it: the United States, Russia and Israel.

In the legal memorandum making a case for a second ICJ opinion, the two groups say that because of conflicting views and failures of implementation, the world is in need of clear guidelines as to what state behaviour is required to meet the nuclear disarmament obligation. The long-promised complete nuclear disarmament, which the ICJ referred to in its 1996 advisory opinion, is not only a political commitment but also a binding legal undertaking.

"Therefore, the ICJ, as the principal organ of the United Nations, should be called upon to articulate much-needed legal guidance resolving current controversies over how to implement the obligation," says the memorandum. "It should provide the world community with the insights needed to turn the promise into reality."

Weeramantry points out that recent statements at the highest international and national levels have raised hopes that the goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons "is not illusory but within reach".

Among these are Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's five-point proposal for progress on disarmament announced in October 2008 and U.S. President Barack Obama's categorical statement in Prague in April pledging "America's commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons."

"The fact that the goal of a nuclear-free world is altogether attainable renders it all the more imperative that the route prescribed by the Court should be meticulously followed," he added..

And the 2010 NPT Review Conference, whose two-week long preparatory meetings conclude Friday, "offers an outstanding opportunity to pursue this objective," Weeramantry added.

Burroughs told IPS that the 1996 ICJ opinion has filtered into public and professional discourse. He said it is taught as part of a course on law of armed conflict in West Point, the U.S. military academy.

What IALANA and the International Human Rights Clinic at Harvard Law School are recommending is that the General Assembly seek clarification from the Court on the legal implications of the disarmament obligation.

Burroughs said among the questions proposed were whether compliance in good faith with the disarmament obligation requires immediate commencement of multilateral negotiations leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a time-bound framework. This is a position held by a large majority of governments, but refused by some nuclear weapons states.

Another question: Would a lack of compliance in good faith with the obligation be demonstrated by planning and implementing long-term retention, maintenance, and modernization of nuclear arsenals, delivery systems, and supportive technical complexes?

"Today the nuclear weapon states are investing large sums in, and planning for, maintaining nuclear forces for decades to come," he said. This hardly seems compatible with an intent to achieve disarmament, he added. But the Court can comment on the legal aspects of this problem.

Yet another question: Does the obligation apply to all states - thus including states outside the NPT, notably India and Pakistan? The Court's 1996 opinion leaves this question open. Some of the judges, including President Mohammed Bedjaoui, in their separate opinions said, yes the obligation does apply to all states. The Court could clarify this important matter, Burroughs said.

**[IPS | May 11, 2009]**

# Nuke Abolition More Urgent Than Ever

By Mikhail Gorbachev \*



One of the most urgent problems of today's world is the danger of nuclear weapons. The unexpected nuclear test by North Korea on May 25 and the test-firing of a series of short-range missiles is the latest, frightening reminder.

One of the most urgent problems of today's world is the danger of nuclear weapons. The unexpected nuclear test by North Korea on May 25 and the test-firing of a series of short-range missiles is the latest, frightening reminder.

Nothing fundamentally new has been achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament in the past decade and a half. Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, the arsenals of the nuclear powers still contain thousands of weapons, and the world is facing the very real possibility of a new arms race.

In effect, all that has been achieved in nuclear disarmament until now is the implementation of the agreements that were signed in the late 1980s and early 1990s: the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty of 1987 (INF), which eliminated two classes of nuclear missiles, and the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), which launched the biggest cutbacks of nuclear weapons ever. Thousands of tactical nuclear weapons were destroyed in accordance with this U.S.-Soviet agreement.

Subsequently, the pace of nuclear arms reduction has slowed and the mechanisms of control and verifications have weakened. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into force. The quantities of nuclear weapons held by Russia and the United States still far exceed the arsenals of all other nuclear powers combined, thus making it more difficult to bring them into the process of nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear non-proliferation regime is in jeopardy. While the two major nuclear powers bear the greatest responsibility for this state of affairs, it was the U.S. that abrogated the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM Treaty), has failed to ratify the CTBT, and refused to conclude with Russia a legally binding, verifiable treaty on strategic offensive arms.

Only recently have we seen indications that the major nuclear powers understand the current state of affairs is untenable. The presidents of the U.S. and Russia have agreed to conclude before the end of this year a verifiable treaty reducing strategic offensive arms and have reaffirmed their countries' commitment to fulfill their obligations under the non-proliferation treaty. Their joint statement calls for a number of other steps to reduce nuclear dangers, including ratification by the U.S. of the CTBT. ➡

**\* Mikhail Gorbachev was leader of the Soviet Union from 1985-1991. He is currently the President of the World Political Forum.**

## NUKE ABOLITION MORE URGENT THAN EVER

Those are positive steps. But the problems and dangers far outnumber the achievements. The root cause of this is the erroneous evaluation of the events that lead to the end of the Cold War. The U.S. and some other countries saw these as a victory of the West and a green light for unilateralist policies.

Accordingly, instead of creating a new architecture of international security based on real cooperation, an attempt was made to impose on the world a "monopoly leadership" by the sole remaining superpower and the institutions and organizations, like NATO, that were inherited from the Cold War and not reformed after it ended.

Picture above: Nobel Laureate M. Gorbachev at a conference - of the World Political Forum on 'Overcoming Nuclear Dangers' - in April 2009 in Rome, with Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini and former U.S. Secretary of State George P. Schultz.

The use and the threat of force, which, of course, are illegal under the UN Charter, were reasserted as a "normal" mode of solving problems. Official documents rationalized doctrines of pre-emptive strike and the need for U.S. military superiority.

Humanity must be wary of a new arms race. Priority is still being given to financing of military programmes, and "defense" budgets far exceeding reasonable security requirements keep growing, as does the weapons trade.

U.S. military expenditures are almost as high as those of the rest of the world combined. Disregard for international law and for peaceful ways of settling disputes, for the United Nations and its Security Council, is being proclaimed as a kind of policy.

As a result, we have witnessed a war in Europe -in Yugoslavia- something that had previously seemed inconceivable; a long-term deterioration in the Middle East; the war in Iraq; an extremely severe situation in Afghanistan and the increasingly alarming nuclear non-proliferation crisis.

Its main cause is the failure of the members of the nuclear club to fulfill their obligations under the Non-Proliferation Treaty to move towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. As long as this is the case, there will be a continued danger that other countries may acquire nuclear weapons. Today, dozens of states have the technical ability to do so.

President Barack Obama and Vice-President Joe Biden with Mikhail Gorbachev on March 20, 2009 in Washington.  
Credit: Wikimedia Commons ►



In the final analysis, the nuclear danger can only be removed by abolishing nuclear weapons. But unless we address the need to demilitarize international relations, reduce military budgets, put an end to the creation of new kinds of weapons, and prevent the weaponisation of outer space, all talk about a nuclear-weapon-free world will be just empty rhetoric.

I think that after President Obama's speech on April 5, there is a real prospect that the U.S. will ratify the CTBT. This would be an important step forward, particularly in combination with a new strategic arms reduction treaty between the U.S. and Russia.

Following this, I believe that other nuclear powers, both the "official members" of the club and others, will have to, at the very least, declare a freeze on their nuclear arsenals and state their readiness to engage in negotiations on their limitation and reduction.

If the holders of the largest stocks of nuclear weapons embark upon real reductions, others will no longer be able to sit it out and conceal their arsenals from international control.

This is an issue that we must raise now if we are to have the kind of trust without which common security cannot be achieved.

**[COPYRIGHT IPS | May 2009]**

# India: Opposition to 'Nuclearism' Builds Up

By Ranjit Devraj in New Delhi

As India follows up on the historic civilian nuclear agreement it signed last year with the United States by drawing up hard commercial deals, opposition to 'nuclearism' is building up among activist groups. The 'India-U.S. Economic Relations: The Next Decade' report released this week by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) says that the nuclear deal marks the beginning of a new era that will see bilateral trade jump from the present 42 billion dollars annually to 320 billion dollars by 2018.

"India intends to import 24 reactors in the next 11-15 years, and could create as many as 20,000 new jobs directly and indirectly in the U.S. from nuclear trade," the CII report says. But although it was the U.S. that pushed India's case past the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and the International Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC), other countries - notably France and Russia - are eager players in India's expanding nuclear commerce. Particularly valuable for India was a special waiver, allowing India to resume nuclear commerce with the rest of the world, by the NSG - which was set up after India's first nuclear weapons test in 1974 "to ensure that nuclear trade for peaceful purposes does not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices."

Anti-nuclear activists believe that India - following the completion of the Indo-US deal - is on the threshold of a new era of 'nuclearisation' which will have far-reaching effects on the way the country is run. "With the India-U.S. nuclear deal, and the deals with Russia and France and likely private participation in nuclear energy generation, the situation is going to get out of hand in our country," says S.P. Udayakumar, convenor of the newly launched National Alliance of Anti-nuclear Movements (NAAM).

NAAM, launched at a three-day convention held in Kanyakumari in southern Tamil Nadu, during the first week of June, plans to mobilise ordinary Indians against the 'nuclearisation' of the country and protect people against nuclear threats and destruction of the environment from nuclear waste and radiation. NAAM warns Indian citizens that they are up against a "combination of profiteering companies, secretive state apparatuses and a repressive nuclear department which will be ruthless." "This nexus of capitalism, statism and nuclearism does not augur well for the country.

These forces are gaining an upper hand in our national polity which will sound the death knell for the country's democracy, openness, and prospects for sustainable development," Udayakumar told IPS. The three-day convention dealt with nuclear industries and related activities such as sea sand mining and the politics of rewriting the Indian Atomic Energy Act 1962. There was also considerable focus on liability issues in the nuclear industry, existing radiation illnesses around existing Indian nuclear power plants, and people's struggles against nuclear installations and mining activities.

India's nuclear programme has been resisted by local people who have stopped two nuclear power stations - Peringome and Kothamangalam in southern India - from coming up while there is continued resistance to the Koodankulam Nuclear Power Plant in Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu. Popular protest movements have also come from places like Jadugoda, Meghalaya, Haripur and Jaitapur who are struggling against uranium mining in their homelands.

While this is the first time civil society is overtly opposing India's ambitious nuclear power programme, there has been fierce political opposition to it ever since it was first proposed more than three years ago and it became a major issue over which the April/May general elections were fought. Achin Vanaik, a prominent participant at the convention, notes that the background to the Indo-U.S. nuclear cooperation deal lies in India endorsing though not joining the US-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Vanaik who teaches international politics at the Delhi University says the U.S. sees India, Japan and Australia as the key nodes in the construction of an 'Asian NATO'.

To amplify the point he indicates the Oct. 23, 2008 'Strategic and Global Partnership' signed between India and Japan. India is only the third country, after the U.S. and Australia, with which Japan has signed such a document. The NAAM convention concluded with the passing of a resolution which noted that every opportunity was being made to push nuclear energy as a "climate- friendly energy source" although the mining and processing of uranium, the building of nuclear power stations and the handling of radioactive waste are "highly unsafe and expensive, and cause enormous climate-changing pollution." [IPS | June 24, 2009]

# India-U.S.: Hurdles Aplenty Before Deal

By Ranjit Devraj in New Delhi

As U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton began talks with Indian officials in New Delhi to take forward a civilian nuclear cooperation agreement, signed by the previous Bush administration, it was apparent that there were many roadblocks to be cleared before deals worth an estimated 10 billion dollars are signed.

Robert Blake, assistant secretary of state for South Asia, said last week, that the deal presented a "major opportunity for American companies, and opens up as much as 10 billion dollars worth of exports to India".

But standing in the way of those business opportunities -- involving the export of reactors and technology -- is legislation pending in Indian parliament that would shield U.S. suppliers from liability in the event of an accident, thereby allowing them to access insurance cover.

Probir Purkayastha, a leading member of the Delhi Science Forum, told IPS that placing responsibility on Indian operators alone while protecting U.S. suppliers was "unacceptable" and likely to be challenged by human rights activists and also by opposition groups in parliament whenever it comes up.

Purkayastha, said he was not opposed to the use of nuclear power to meet India's energy needs but was worried because of the sheer cost of U.S. atomic energy which he estimated at around 5.6 million dollars per megawatt. U.S. firms like GE-Hitachi and Westinghouse Electric already face competition from suppliers such as the Paris-based Areva SA and Russia's Rosatom Corp. which are covered by sovereign immunity because they

are fully or partially controlled by governments when it comes to liability issues.

While sites have already been identified in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat, where U.S. nuclear power plants may be built, separate talks between Indian and U.S. officials are to begin later this week in Vienna to determine how spent fuel generated by U.S. supplied reactors will be reprocessed.

Under the pact signed last year between the two countries to open up sales of civilian nuclear technology to India, after a gap of three decades, India was to build a specially safeguarded facility where the reprocessing of spent fuel would be carried out.

India, under the deal, gains access to U.S. technology and atomic energy it allows inspection of Indian civilian nuclear facilities by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Military sites are excluded and this has been a sticking point with arms-control advocates who opposed deal on the grounds that there were inadequate safeguards to separate India's military nuclear programme from its power-generation.

As part of the deal, the Bush administration had obtained for India a special waiver on nuclear trade from the 45-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). The group ruled last September that "participating governments may transfer nuclear-related dual-use equipment, materials, software and related technology to India for peaceful purposes and for use in IAEA safeguarded civil nuclear facilities." ↻



## INDIA-U.S.: HURDLES APLENTY BEFORE DEAL

However, the G8 nations, at their summit in L'Aquila, Italy earlier this month, declared a ban on the transfer of enrichment and reprocessing (ENR) technology and equipment to countries that have not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). India has consistently refused to sign the NPT saying it is discriminatory.

The G8 declaration welcomed efforts to "reduce the proliferation risks associated with the spread of enrichment and reprocessing facilities, equipment and technology," and the "progress that continues to be made by the NSG on mechanisms to strengthen controls on transfers of such enrichment and reprocessing items and technology."

However, the declaration committed NSG member countries to implement on a "national basis" proposals that were "useful and constructive" to strengthen controls on ENR items and technology developed at a November 2008 meeting of its consultative group.

U.S. involvement in the G8 sparked fears being expressed in India that the administration of President Barack Obama was targeting India as non-signatory of the NPT. But these fears were allayed in Parliament by Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee on Jul. 13 when he told members that because there was an "India-specific safeguards agreement with the IAEA, we are not concerned over what position the G8 takes."

Analysts say that India's real bargaining strengths lie in its plans to spend at least 175 billion dollars on nuclear energy production in the next 30 years and the fact that it has developed its own technologies in spite of technology sanctions on reactors, technology and fuel imposed immediately after it carried out nuclear tests in 1974.

There are other worries for the main U.S. nuclear suppliers, Westinghouse and General Electric because of their close links with Japan, a country with which India does not

have a nuclear cooperation agreement. Westinghouse is owned by Japan's Toshiba Corp., while GE has a strategic partnership with Hitachi to jointly execute nuclear energy projects worldwide

On Sunday, the Imagindia Institute, an independent think-tank, issued a statement that said: "It is our significant worry that unless Japan and India have a nuclear cooperation agreement, it may be difficult for Westinghouse and GE to participate in Indian business."

According to the Institute's statement, unless Toshiba and Hitachi obtain specific clearances from Tokyo "the ability of GE and Westinghouse to engage in India's nuclear business may be severely handicapped."

But the biggest opposition to U.S. companies may come from activists who are citing the dismal record of the Union Carbide Corp. which was responsible for the world's worst industrial disaster when its pesticides plant in Bhopal city killed 3,800 people following a leak of cyanide gas in December 1984.

In June, a group of 27 members of U.S. Congress wrote to Dow Chemicals, which took over Union Carbide's assets in Bhopal in 2001, to accept responsibility for meeting the medical needs of the survivors and their economic rehabilitation, besides cleaning up the soil and water of the area around the site.

"Despite repeated public requests and protests around the world, Union Carbide has refused to appear before the Bhopal District Court to face the criminal charges pending against it for the disaster," the letter to Dow said.

"With what happened in Bhopal in view, we will oppose any move to bring in legislation to shield U.S. suppliers from liability in the event of a nuclear accident," S.P. Udayakumar, convenor of the convenor of the National Alliance of Anti-nuclear Movements (NAAM), told IPS.

In particular, NAAM is opposed to India acceding to the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage which makes plant operators responsible for damages from any accident while shielding suppliers from liability. **[IPS | July 21, 2009]**



# Have no Nuclear Weapons, Just Share Them

By Wolfgang Kerler in Berlin

Most Germans support nuclear abolition, but the country may still not give up its policy of nuclear sharing.

"The government is divided on the question of nuclear sharing," Otfried Nassauer, director of the Berlin Information Centre for Transatlantic Security (BITS) told IPS. The centre researches foreign and security policy issues.

Based on the limited information that is publicly available, Nassauer estimates there are 10 to 20 U.S. nuclear bombs still located in Germany, out of thousands deployed during the Cold War.

Germany does not have its own nuclear weapons under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that it signed in 1975, but it is sharing U.S. bombs located in Germany. This dates back to the late 1950s when the first U.S. nukes were positioned in former West Germany - and is part of the policy of deterrence of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

The Social Democratic Party (SPD), junior partner in the ruling 'grand coalition' headed by Chancellor Angela Merkel, is calling for withdrawal of the remaining bombs after U.S. President Barack Obama presented his vision of nuclear abolition in a speech in Prague Apr. 5.

Obama called the thousands of atomic weapons spread across the world "the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War." He said: "To achieve a global ban on nuclear testing, my administration will immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. So after more than five decades of talks, it is time for the testing of nuclear weapons to finally be banned."

"The new era we are fighting for is an era during which nuclear weapons have to vanish from the arsenals," Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who is also deputy chancellor in the coalition government and SPD's candidate for chancellor in the federal elections due September, said in a speech Jun. 14.

All opposition parties represented in the federal parliament, the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP), the Greens, and the socialist Left Party are also pushing for withdrawal of the atomic bombs. On May 15, Guido Westerwelle, leader of the largest opposition party FDP, stressed that "the time has come for a renaissance of disarmament. "The withdrawal of the remaining strategic nuclear weapons from Germany would be an adequate reaction to this new dynamic," Westerwelle added.

Germany's largest political party, the conservative Christian Democratic Union (CDU) headed by Merkel, and its sister party the Christian Social Union (CSU), which together are the larger partner in the coalition government with the SPD, have welcomed Obama's new efforts for nuclear abolition - but they are not willing to give up the policy of nuclear sharing in a unilateral move.

"We should exercise care in not mixing up the goals with the ways leading to them," Merkel had said earlier Mar. 26. "I stick to the complete abolition of all weapons of mass destruction. But the federal government has fixed the nuclear sharing policy in its White Paper to secure our influence within NATO in this highly sensitive area."

When the government adopted its White Paper on German Security Policy and the Future of the Bundeswehr (the federal armed forces) back in 2006, Steinmeier's SPD agreed to hanging on to the policy of nuclear sharing.

Nassauer of BITS says the CDU and CSU policies are contradictory. "On the one hand, the federal government is banning its soldiers from using nuclear weapons because it would violate international law, and on the other, it is still training soldiers how to use U.S. atomic bombs with German fighter jets.

"And unless there is a secret agreement between the U.S. President and the German Chancellor on Germany's participation that we don't know of, I cannot see how the end of nuclear sharing would downsize Germany's position within NATO," Nassauer told IPS. Other countries like Canada and Greece gave up their nuclear sharing years ago, "and they did not lose their influence within the alliance." ↻

## HAVE NO NUCLEAR WEAPONS



Henning Riecke, an expert on transatlantic security relations at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP), a Berlin-based think tank, defends the Chancellor's position.

"Like Obama, the federal government wants to see stepwise disarmament," Riecke told IPS. "Therefore, the nuclear side of NATO's strategy does not have to be put up for negotiation first. There have to be coordinated steps that do not disadvantage one side."

Nassauer argues that nuclear sharing is not necessary to keep up NATO's potential of deterrence. "There are enough submarines charged with atomic bombs that could keep the potential up."

However divided Germany's position on nuclear sharing might be, Nassauer and Riecke agree that the country has continuously proven its commitment to fighting nuclear proliferation.

In 2007, Germany and Norway began an initiative to strengthen NATO's measures to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The German foreign ministry has presented several proposals to that end. Besides, "Germany has been pushing the United States to put disarmament back on the agenda," Riecke said.

Steinmeier has urged nuclear powers to accelerate the process of nuclear demobilisation on many occasions this year - for instance at the Munich security conference in February, attended by high-ranking security experts, senior officials and government ministers.

In his speech Jun. 14 at a special convention of the SPD, Steinmeier announced that Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin had confirmed to him that Russia is willing to join an international effort for nuclear demobilisation.

Meanwhile, a change in Germany's official position on nuclear sharing seems unlikely - even after the upcoming federal elections in September. All polls show Angela Merkel's conservatives outperforming the social democrats by far.

Nevertheless, for technical reasons, Germany's army will probably lose its ability to use U.S. atomic bombs: by 2020, all Tornado jet fighters that are equipped to carry such weapons will be scrapped. Their successor, the Eurofighter, is not capable of carrying nuclear bombs. **[IPS | June 27, 2009]**

◀ Photo: Guido Westerwelle | Credit: Wikimedia Commons

# France Ambiguous on Nuclear Disarmament

By Alecia D. McKenzie in Paris

As the international war of words over nuclear programmes heats up, with North Korea threatening to strengthen its "nuclear deterrence" against the United States, countries such as France are taking a position that some analysts describe as ambiguous and hypocritical.

France and Britain are the two countries in Western Europe that are nuclear weapon states. While French official policy is that stockpiles should be reduced and testing stopped, the government of President Nicolas Sarkozy has not indicated a commitment to total nuclear disarmament.

Sarkozy does not, however, want to see certain other countries developing nuclear weapons. At a joint press conference in June, he and U.S. President Barack Obama warned both North Korea and Iran against developing such arms.

"Iran has the right to civilian nuclear power but not a military nuclear capability," Sarkozy said, after condemning North Korea's nuclear test in May.

But some analysts say the French position is two-faced. "All this talk is hypocritical," says Pierre-Emmanuel Veck, spokesman for the Sortir du Nucleaire Network (Phasing out the Nuclear Age), the main French anti-nuclear coalition, which groups 841 organizations.

"You cannot separate a civilian nuclear programme from nuclear weapons," he told IPS. "So when France sells nuclear centrals to countries such as Libya for electricity, for instance, one knows that the bomb isn't far behind."

France has an "ambiguous" position, Veck adds. Sarkozy would like to reduce the country's nuclear warheads, but the government is reluctant to do so while other countries such as the United States and Russia keep their own stockpiles high, and while there is threat from "unstable" countries such as Iran and North Korea. France says it has reduced its number of air-launched weapons by a third, cutting its nuclear arsenal to around 300 nuclear warheads by last September.

Sarkozy has said that global disarmament must be based on "reciprocity" - a kind of 'we'll get rid of ours if you get rid of yours' approach that some critics find unacceptable. ➡



## FRANCE AMBIGUOUS

France also says it is the only one of the five original nuclear weapon states to have dismantled its testing site and fissile material production installations. Other countries have not been clear about their own measures, and the situation is set to become even murkier in the months before next May's Review Conference of the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Like the previous conference five years ago, the 2010 event could end in disappointment for those seeking disarmament.

"Disarmament is not going to happen any time soon as long as the discourse remains at this level," Veck says. "Having nuclear capability is a sign of power, and countries are using nuclear arms as a bargaining tool for many things, including aid."

Analysts say the "new nuclear states" North Korea, Iran, Israel, India and Pakistan will continue to assert their right to develop nuclear programmes, while the stance of the original five nuclear weapon states - France, the United Kingdom, China, the United States, and Russia - leaves much to be desired.

"Most people in NATO countries don't realize that their governments continue to sanction the use of nuclear weapons," says Uta Zapf, co-president of Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), an international network that provides parliamentarians with up-to-date information on nuclear weapons policies.

"Nor do they realise that some NATO countries - Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey - still host U.S. nuclear weapons on their soil for use if conflict breaks out," she said in a statement. (France rejoined the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation earlier this year after a 43-year absence.)

"Nuclear weapons, like landmines and cluster munitions, are indiscriminate, inhumane, immoral and illegal. They must all be prohibited and eliminated," added Zapf.

Some groups in France would also like to see civilian nuclear programmes scaled back, and more money spent on renewable energy, according to the Sortir du Nucleaire Network. France currently gets about 80 percent of its energy from 59 nuclear power plants located across the country.

The government plans to build solar plants in each French region by 2011, says ecology minister Jean-Louis Borloo, but it is not clear how that will affect the country's nuclear programme.

In the run-up to the Review Conference of the 189 'states parties', or signatories, to the Non-Proliferation Treaty, France has been making moves to delineate its own principles as well as those of its European partners.

When France held the six-month rotating presidency of the European Union last year, Sarkozy sent a letter to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon outlining the EU's proposals for furthering nuclear disarmament.

"Europe wishes to act for peace," Sarkozy wrote last December. "This is true whether the question is the struggle against terrorism, the struggle against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their vectors, or the management of crises.

"It is true also when the issue is disarmament, notably nuclear disarmament. Europe is particularly concerned, since two member states have nuclear weapons," he added.

The EU proposals include "the universal ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the completion of its verification regime, as well as the dismantling as soon as possible of all nuclear testing facilities in a way that is transparent and open to the international community," Sarkozy wrote.

He said the EU was also calling for the beginning of "negotiations for banning production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons, as well as implementation of an immediate moratorium on production of such material."

In June, in reference to Iran, Sarkozy declared, "We want peace, we want dialogue, and we want to help them develop. But we do not want military nuclear weapons to spread."  
**[IPS | June 30, 2009]**

# Mideast: Fine-Tuning the Cold War

By Jerrold Kessel and Pierre Klochender in Jerusalem

Ambiguity - is it the watchword for all involved in the issue over whether Iran goes nuclear, especially in light of the ongoing political uncertainties that engulf the Islamic Republic?

In trying to decipher the Iranian nuclear puzzle it is perhaps worth going back to the attitude that, during the Cold War, became U.S. doctrine under Robert McNamara (who died just a week before this article being written).

During his tenure as secretary of defence, the prevailing conception of nuclear deterrence became known as "mutual assured destruction" wherein the U.S. and then Soviet Republic both knew that they could destroy the other even if the other struck first.

Perhaps Iran is heading precisely this way with regard to Israel, surmises Ehud Ya'ari of Israel's Channel 2 TV, considered a leading Middle East analyst, and known for his "reliable sources" within Israel's security establishment.

Iran will not desist from its civilian nuclear programme, but is projecting a deliberately ambiguous attitude with respect to its nuclear ambitions, said Ya'ari who speculated that Iran would not hold back from completing the very last phase of converting nuclear knowhow for civilian purposes into a military capability.

Strikingly, this is the kind of policy to which Israel has itself cleaved for decades when declaring, "We will never be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the Middle East." Israel has consistently stuck to this formula in a bid to ward off the charge that it is already a nuclear power with dozens of nuclear warheads at its disposal.

Until now while provocatively parading its enhanced missile delivery programme, Iran under President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has stuck to the line that it has an alienable right to acquire nuclear knowhow, but has steered clear of saying out loud that it intended to move its civilian nuclear programme to the level of military capability.

The U.S. attitude to this Iranian imbroglio remains ambiguous - for all President Barack Obama's declared intention to move the world towards greater and greater nuclear disarmament, not just within the parameters of the Russian-U.S. equation.

This U.S. ambiguity was crystal clear when the President and his Vice- President, Joe Biden, made differently nuanced statements reflecting U.S. concern on how Israel deals with its concerns about Iran. The U.S., Biden said on ABC television, "cannot dictate to another sovereign nation what they can and cannot do" if it feels threatened by another country.

Israel might well have understood that Biden's statement should not be understood as a U.S. green light to bomb Iran's nuclear facilities. But just a day later, Obama felt obliged to make a corrective categorical statement on CNN; "Absolutely not," he replied, when asked whether the U.S. has quietly given Israel such a green light.

An Israeli government source says Biden's statement was not coordinated with Israel.

After several days of "no comment" in response to the flurry of U.S. declarations, the first statement by an Israeli official came in the form of a startlingly frank weekend interview by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's National Security Advisor, Uzi Arad.

He told Ha'aretz that Iran has already crossed the point of nuclear no-return which could be defined, he said, "as the point at which Iran has the ability to complete the cycle of nuclear fuel production on its own; the point at which it has all the elements to produce fissionable material without depending on outsiders. Iran is now there," Arad told the paper. "I don't know if it has mastered all the technologies, but it is more or less there." ↻



## MIDEAST: FINE-TUNING THE COLD WAR

Iran will not desist from its civilian nuclear programme, but is projecting a deliberately ambiguous attitude with respect to its nuclear ambitions, said Ya'ari who speculated that Iran would not hold back from completing the very last phase of converting nuclear knowhow for civilian purposes into a military capability.



But, Arad added, "Iran is not yet nuclear and not yet operational. Serious obstacles still lie in the way. The international community still has enough time to make it stop of its own volition...Obviously not enough was done. And what was done was too late, too little and too feeble. In practice we will be able to block Iran. But the line that was termed a 'red line' has been crossed."

Arad was asked, "Isn't it time to accept that Iran will be a nuclear power?"

He responded: "The major fear is that a nuclear Iran will burst the dam of nuclear proliferation in the region. It is wrong to say that just as in the Cold War, the world lived with a nuclear Soviet Union and with a nuclear China, we will also be able to live with a nuclear Iran. The subject is not just a nuclear Iran; the subject is a multi-nuclear Middle East.

"Serious experts, who are not Israelis, look at the Middle East and say that if Iran becomes nuclear in 2015, the Middle East will be nuclear in 2020. And a multi-nuclear Middle East is a nightmare.

Five or six nuclear states in a jumpy, unstable region where the world's energy resources are located will not create nuclear quiet, but nuclear disquiet. A nuclear Middle East will be exactly like an upside-down pyramid."

Arad added, "I will say that independent strategists believe that anyone who wants a deal with the Iranians must have a military option. The more credible and concrete the option, the less likely that it will be needed; in fact, those who do not put a military option on the table are liable to find themselves having to resort to it."

A stark and somewhat less ambiguous assessment than has become customary whenever the Iran nuclear issue is addressed. A fine-tuning of Cold War days of nuclear deterrence: to deter Iran before it reaches its sought-after breaking point. At least perhaps, to deter Iran from going down the road of Israel's own policy of deliberate nuclear ambiguity.  
[IPS | July 13, 2009]



# N-Britain Goes Uselessly to Sea

By Sanjay Suri in London

Too early yet to call it a victory for anti-nuclear lobbyists, but the British government decision last week to put off an upgrade of its Trident nuclear system is at least denial of immediate victory to those who want newer nuclear weapons.

A move to upgrade the Trident system was due to get going in September. But several MPs asked for a debate on this, rather than have the move go ahead while Parliament was in recess. Prime Minister Gordon Brown did one better – he has put off the decision until after the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) meeting due in May of next year.

"This is consistent with the intentions of the Prime Minister in favour of multilateral disarmament decisions worldwide," Kate Hudson, chair of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) Kate Hudson told IPS.

The question of the extension of the Trident system will also now be included in the Strategic Defence Review due to begin in the spring of next year. Trident is a system comprising 58 nuclear-armed submarine-launched ballistic missiles fitted on to four submarines. At least one of these submarines is on constant patrol. The system is a shorter version of the U.S. Navy's fleet of 14 submarines each equipped with nuclear missiles.

The Trident system was considered by many to be outdated even when it entered service in 1994; the Soviet threat against which it was designed had already receded. The case for keeping up such a system is now far weaker.

"We don't believe the UK needs a nuclear weapons system, and we are very pleased that recent polls show that the UK should scrap it," says Hudson. "Retired generals and field marshals have been saying the system is militarily useless and should be scrapped." ➡



A Trident missile armed *Vanguard* class ballistic missile submarine leaving its base in the Firth of Clyde.  
Credit: Wikimedia Commons

## N-BRITAIN GOES USELESSLY TO SEA

**Any British move towards upgrading to new weapon systems would fly in the face of the trends Obama may set. And it may not be entirely a choice for Britain to make, dependent as it is on the U.S. to supply much of these systems, even though officially Britain's nuclear weapons programmes is independent of that of the U.S.**

A Guardian/ICM poll on Jul. 14 indicated that 54 percent of Britons want the country to get rid of nuclear weapons, and that only 42 percent want replacement of the Trident with a new generation of nuclear weapons.

Britain keeps the system going at a considerable cost of up to 2 billion pounds (3.2 billion dollars) a year. The official upgrade cost would be 76 billion pounds (124 billion dollars). Taking into account the cost of dealing with the present system, Britain is looking at a nuclear weapons bill of 100 billion pounds (160 billion dollars).

But there is a cost here that goes far beyond money. Many fear it is damaging to keep a useless system going just in case of some threat that may emerge in the future, even if there is none at the moment that the submarines are guarding Britain against.

"It cannot be just a matter of keeping these weapons in the cupboard just in case," says Hudson. "That would only encourage others to have them, and as a result you might just end up creating a situation where one might actually need them. Instead we need a virtuous cycle, and begin to come down to the global zero that everyone in the world aspires to."

The push to include the Trident replacement in the Strategic Defence Review has a limited degree of cross-party support, but the position on the Trident is certain to change after elections due in Britain next year – possibly around the same time as the NPT conference in May. There are clear indications that the Conservative Party will win the next election. The Conservatives have traditionally been keener on nuclear weapons than Labour.

Conservative Party leader David Cameron has backed modernisation of the Trident system. "That's a mandate if we're elected that we will have to deliver," he says.

But a British leadership would have to take its cue from the trends that emerge from any agreement between U.S. President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev. Talks between the two leaders in London in April and again in Moscow earlier this month have yielded encouraging signs of steps towards reduction of nuclear stockpiles, if not outright disarmament.

Any British move towards upgrading to new weapon systems would fly in the face of the trends Obama may set. And it may not be entirely a choice for Britain to make, dependent as it is on the U.S. to supply much of these systems, even though officially Britain's nuclear weapons programmes is independent of that of the U.S.

Any move to renew the Trident system also sets the government in London against Scottish parties; the nuclear submarines are all based at Clyde in Scotland. The Scottish National Party that campaigns for independence of Scotland from the UK has the support of several smaller parties, and a renewal of the Trident could strengthen these parties' campaign against the government at Westminster in London.

Scottish National Party leader Alex Salmond has already clashed with Conservative Party leader David Cameron over a Trident renewal, following Cameron's call not to obstruct the programme for renewing the Trident.

"If that missile system is unwanted by the body politic of Scotland, unwanted by Scottish members of parliament at Westminster, not wanted by the Scottish Parliament, then surely that Prime Minister would expect the Scottish Parliament to make its view known in every area and way that was open to it to do."

**[IPS | July 20, 2009]**

# Obama to Bolster Nuclear Disarmament at UN

By Thalif Deen in New York

When U.S. President Barack Obama presides over a meeting of world leaders in the Security Council on Sep. 24, he will provide a high profile political platform for two of the most sensitive issues at the United Nations: nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

"This is the time for the Security Council to plan together a route to international security in a nuclear weapons-free world," Jonathan Granoff, president of the Global Security Institute, told IPS.

"We cannot threaten each other with annihilation on Monday and work together sufficiently to meet our shared threats on Tuesday, not knowing whether we will be friends or foes on Wednesday," he added.

Frida Berrigan, senior associate of the Arms and Security Initiative at the New America Foundation, says President Obama, in his historic Apr. 2009 speech in Prague, acknowledged the need for U.S. leadership and initiative on nuclear disarmament. As the only nation to use nuclear weapons, the U.S. has a moral responsibility to act, Obama said, in the Czech capital.

"We cannot succeed in this endeavour alone, but we can lead it, we can start it," Berrigan added. Obama's decision to chair a special meeting of the Security Council "is part of that commitment to lead efforts towards nuclear disarmament," Berrigan told IPS.

Obama is expected to make his maiden appearance at the UN when he addresses the global summit on climate change on Sep. 22. The next day he will address the opening of the high level segment of the 64th sessions of the General Assembly, in the company of Brazilian President Lula da Silva, French President Nicholas Sarkozy and Libyan leader Muammar el Qaddafi (who will also be visiting the UN for the first time).

The special session of the Security Council, which is to be chaired by Obama on Sep. 24, will also be attended by political leaders from the 14 other members states - including the other four permanent members of the Council, namely China, Britain, France and Russia.

The 10 non-permanent members in the Security Council, whose heads of state have been invited to participate, include Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, Libya, Vietnam, Austria, Mexico, Japan, Turkey and Uganda.

A similar session of the Security Council - on the maintenance of international peace and security - was held in Jan. 1992 presided over by then British Prime Minister John Major.

But that meeting "came out with a self-serving statement making proliferation of nuclear weapons a breach of international peace and security and therefore justifying Security Council action, thus absolving the five permanent members - all nuclear weapon states - of any blame for nuclear weapon possession," Jayantha Dhanapala, a former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, told IPS.

The Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Commission chaired by Hans Blix - on a suggestion by Dhanapala - had proposed a Global Summit on proliferation, disarmament and possible terrorist uses of WMD. Dhanapala, one of the world's foremost authorities on nuclear disarmament and currently president of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, said the Security Council - as presently constituted - has a serious legitimacy deficit.

He said a credible Summit could only take place with the involvement of the 192-member General Assembly, and also the participation of those nuclear weapon states outside the Security Council. "As importantly, the voices of civil society must be heard and so the Security Council must break with past practice and invite Nobel Peace Prize Laureates like Pugwash and others like Dr. Hans Blix to make presentations," he added.

Granoff of the Global Security Institute said the upcoming special session will take place after several days of intense discussion regarding protecting the climate and finding new levels of cooperation to address a shared economic environment. ➡



## OBAMA TO BOLSTER NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

"In a world where bridges of cooperation must be built to address our shared environmental and economic interdependence, what place do the walls of fear and threat of nuclear weapons play?" he asked. He said any progress on climate, sustainable development, and economic well being will come undone by the use of nuclear weapons. "The threat of use will always be there as long as the weapons exist," said Granoff, who is also co-chair of the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Nuclear Non-Proliferation. Steps need to be taken to lessen the threat on the road to elimination, he said.

These include entry into force of the test ban, strengthening verification of cuts and making them irreversible, and quickly coming down to sufficiently low numbers - to affirm that their only value is to prevent them from being used. "We must build a security system based on the principle of zero nuclear weapons," Granoff stressed.

That means promptly affirming that the first use of a nuclear weapon is crime against humanity and that even any retaliatory use would have to be aimed in such a manner as to not violate international humanitarian law - thus never be aimed at a city. This small window of qualified legitimacy to make sure they are not used cannot be leveraged into a doctrine that justifies keeping the weapons, but must be a mere step toward achieving the goal of elimination, said Granoff.

Berrigan of the New America Foundation said she expects President Obama to champion the modest cuts that the U.S. and Russia have agreed upon so far; call for greater cooperation from other Security Council members; reach out in qualified ways to Iran and North Korea; and elaborate on how the work towards nuclear disarmament is not just sensible and overdue, but also contributes to U.S. national security.

"All of this work is worthy of the spotlight, but will need a lot of follow-up in order to be meaningful in its own right," Berrigan said. Everything cannot be achieved in a single meeting, but even in the realm of symbolism, this is an important shift

towards engagement and away from the former Bush Administration's disdainful treatment of the UN, said Berrigan, who is also a columnist for Foreign Policy in Focus.

Peter Weiss, president of the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy (LCNP), told IPS: "Here's what I think Obama will do: announce the U.S. support of the renewal of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START); ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); and negotiation of the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). And here's what I think he should do, in addition: Announce that, at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in May next year, the U.S. will propose an international conference for the purpose of beginning serious work on a convention outlawing the possession of nuclear weapons and criminalising their use."

Without this second step, Weiss said, the first series of steps will not bring about the nuclear weapons free world which Obama spoke about in Prague. Granoff said that at the closing session of the 1992 Security Council meeting then U.K. Prime Minister Major included in his statement elements pertinent today: "The members of the Council underline the need for all Member States to fulfil their obligations in relation to arms control and disarmament." Since then, he said, the obligation to achieve nuclear disarmament pursuant to Article VI of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty and the mandate of the unanimous decision of the International Court of Justice remain substantially unfulfilled.

"It is time that the legal mechanisms of the UN Charter be followed in this regard," Granoff stressed. Amongst them, he pointed out, is Article 26 which would task the UN Military Staff Committee to submit plans for nuclear disarmament to the Members States. That Section - which requires "maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments - must now be invoked and include nuclear disarmament in its mandate. This Military Staff Committee is described in Article 47 as including Chiefs of Staff of the five permanent members of the Security Council.

"It is high time that these military leaders be charged with fulfilling their disarmament duties," he added. **[IPS | August 12, 2009]**

# U.S. Says No to Nukes, Yes to Conventional Arms

By Thalif Deen in New York

U.S. President Barack Obama's pledge to take concrete steps towards "a world without nuclear weapons" has garnered overwhelming support from peace activists worldwide. But at the same time he has given no indication of any similar cutbacks on conventional arms sales - at least judging by rising U.S. weapons exports this year.

"Thus far, the Obama Administration has devoted little attention to U.S. arms sales policy," says Natalie J. Goldring, a senior fellow with the Centre for Peace and Security Studies at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University.

She says sales of major U.S. weapons systems, including fighter aircraft, missiles, warships and battle tanks, have continued to soar.

In effect, Goldring told IPS, it seems to be "business as usual," as the U.S. predicts unprecedented arms sales in 2009.

According to the Pentagon, U.S. government-to-government sales are expected to exceed an estimated 40 billion dollars by the end of this year compared with 36.4 billion dollars in 2008.

In the early 2000s, the annual average sales were in the region of about 8.0 billion to 13 billion dollars. But in the first half of this year alone, total U.S. weapons sales have hit the 27 billion dollar mark - and are rising.

The projected sales are mostly to U.S. allies, including Egypt, Israel, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Greece, South Korea, Bahrain, Jordan, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), among others.

"That's good news for weapons contractors, who have historically tried to sell weapons to counteract possible cuts in the military budget," Goldring said. "But its bad news for those of us who were hoping that the Obama Administration would re-evaluate U.S. arms transfer policy," she added.

Siemon Wezeman, senior researcher in the Arms Transfer Programme at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), one of the world's leading think tanks, says the data given by the Pentagon is slightly unclear. He said he was not sure if the 40 billion dollar figure refers to real sales or only proposed/requested/possible sales for 2009.

However, having said that, U.S. exports are clearly showing an upward trend, for which there are several reasons, he added.

"Probably the most important is that there are now less producers of advanced larger weaponry than 10-20 years ago, which means that buyers have less options to choose from," Wezeman told IPS.

The U.S., he pointed out, is generally the most advanced producer with a wide range of products and offers basically everything a buyer could wish for - especially in the popular fields of advanced combat and other aircraft, missiles and electronics.

He said there are very few major arms producers around, and the U.S. part of the pie has grown, and is likely to grow even more.

One good example is the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) combat aircraft, for which there is very little tactical alternative and for which contracts have been signed in 2009 - it is possible the U.S. projections included further orders for the JSF in 2009.

The JSF programme is already slated to be the largest - in value - arms export deal ever, and it still has a massive growth potential. It has very little competition globally.

This alone would be enough to keep U.S. exports at a very high level for the coming 20 or more years, Wezeman added. Also important is that many of the larger traditional U.S. customers in Asia (Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Pakistan, Australia), the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, UAE) and Europe (Turkey, UK) all have recently placed large orders for ➡

## U.S. SAYS NO TO NUKES

U.S. equipment or are planning to do so soon. Despite the financial crisis, Wezeman said, many of these countries are significantly increasing their military budgets and plan orders of the latest military equipment.

He said part of this is because these countries react to a perceived threat - for example, war against 'terrorism', China's ongoing modernization, North Korea's and Iran's nuclear programmes, or ongoing operations in Afghanistan.

Taiwan alone, for example, is expected to sign arms orders worth several billion dollars this year, after about 8 years of negotiations and low levels of arms imports from the U.S. in previous years.

At the same time, Saudi Arabia has announced plans for over 10 billion dollars worth of U.S. arms, part of which has been or is expected to be signed in 2009-2010.

In addition, the U.S. has entered the huge Indian market - with a few 'appetizers' worth around 2-3 billion dollars. Agreements were signed recently and there are expectations for further orders this year.

The U.S. is also currently the main arms supplier to Iraq (with planned orders for nearly 10 billion dollars, much of which is supposed to be finalized in 2009-2010).

Goldring of Georgetown University said the Obama Administration started slowly in authorising new arms sales, according to Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) data.

During the first five months of the new administration, DSCA notified Congress of a total of eight possible major weapons sales.

The pace soon accelerated, however. In July alone, DSCA notified Congress of an additional eight potential major sales, matching the notifications of the previous five months.

And in just the first week of August, DSCA submitted an additional ten notifications to Congress.

"Public statements suggest that Obama Administration officials have already been tempted to use arms sales as a symbol of U.S. friendship and commitment to bilateral and multilateral relationships," Goldring noted. In the past, U.S. officials also frequently argued that such sales would help countries provide for their own defences.

But U.S. arms sales have often seemed to exacerbate the very threats they were intended to prevent - spurring arms races, intensifying regional rivalries, and increasing the human cost when conflicts occurred - she added.

Instead of allowing the excesses of the past to continue, policy makers should factor in the potential long term negative consequences of these sales.

Goldring said the burden of proof should be on those who want to sell arms, not on those who try to stop the sales.

President Obama seems to understand the destabilizing effects of unrestrained sales of small arms and light weapons because he has spoken eloquently of the damage caused by such weapons.

He has already begun working to reverse some of the policies of the former Bush Administration in that area.

"Our national security would be well served by expanding this effort to include the full range of conventional weapons," Goldring said. [IPS | August 14, 2009]

**"Probably the most important is that there are now less producers of advanced larger weaponry than 10-20 years ago, which means that buyers have less options to choose from."**



# Egypt Rejects U.S. Nuclear Umbrella

By Fared Mahdy\* in Cairo



The spectre of a U.S. nuclear umbrella for the Middle East haunted the U.S.- Egyptian summit. In the run-up to President Hosni Mubarak's first Washington visit in five years, both the Egyptian leader and his senior aides categorically rejected an undeclared U.S. offer to guarantee defence of the region against atomic weapons as part of a comprehensive Middle East peace plan.

A nuclear umbrella is usually used for the security alliances of the United States with non-nuclear states such as Japan, South Korea, much of Europe, Turkey, Canada, and Australia, originating with the Cold War with the then Soviet Union. For some countries it was an alternative to acquiring nuclear weapons themselves.

According to knowledgeable sources, the Egyptian President insisted with President Barack Obama on Aug. 18 that "what the Middle East needs is peace, security, stability and development," not nuclear weapons.

In doing so, Mubarak reaffirmed Egypt's pledge underlying the country's commitment since 1974 for the establishment of a "nuclear free Middle East".

Pre-empting discussion on the issue, Mubarak said in an exclusive interview with the leading Egyptian daily Al-Ahram on Aug. 17 that "Egypt will not be part of any American nuclear umbrella intended to protect the Gulf countries."

Such an umbrella, he said, "would imply accepting foreign troops and experts on our land - and we do not accept that." Mubarak also emphasized that a U.S. nuclear umbrella "would imply an implicit acceptance that there is a regional nuclear power - we do not accept that either."

The Egyptian president asserted that "the Middle East does not need any nuclear powers, be they Iran or Israel - what we need is peace, security, stability and development." In any

case, "we have not received any official communication regarding such a proposal," he added.

On the same day, Suleiman Awad, spokesperson of the Egyptian Presidency, also commented on a U.S. nuclear umbrella in the region.

"This is not the first time the issue is raised; it is part of the U.S. defence policy," the presidential spokesperson said. "What is new is that it is raised now for the Middle East."

At the height of the Sino-Indian war that coincided closely with the Cuban missile crisis in October 1962, the U.S. Administration under president John F. Kennedy made an informal offer of a nuclear umbrella to India at a time when the country felt constrained to seek U.S. military support to defend itself against China.

Commenting on alleged U.S. nuclear plans in the Middle East now, Awad said: "It is absolutely rejectable both in form and content. Instead of talking about a nuclear umbrella, the Iranian nuclear file should be dealt with (in a spirit of) dialogue and flexibility from both sides - the West, and Iran."

He added: "Iran has the right to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, like any other country signatory of the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty), provided that it proves that its programme is for peaceful uses." Mubarak's spokesperson then underlined: "At the same time, this must be accompanied, simultaneously, by a serious move vis-à-vis Israel's nuclear capacity, in order to avoid accusations of double standards."

These remarks are in continuity with Egypt's 35-year-long campaign aiming at the establishment of a "nuclear free Middle East". In 1990, Mubarak revitalised the Egyptian initiative through a new, larger plan to declare the Middle East a "weapons of mass destruction free region", including nuclear weapons. ➡

**\*The writer is a correspondent of the IDN-InDepthNews.**

## EGYPT REJECTS U.S. NUCLEAR UMBRELLA

The Egyptian initiative has drawn support from most Arab countries and has been recently reaffirmed by Amre Musa (in picture below), Secretary General of the League of Arab States, representing all the 22 Arab countries. The Egyptian initiative has drawn support from most Arab countries and has been recently reaffirmed by Amre Musa (in picture above), Secretary General of the League of Arab States, representing all the 22 Arab countries.



Musa declared on Jul. 5: "It is a must to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons." Arab support for the "nuclear free Middle East" initiative has gathered added strength particularly in the Gulf Arab countries in the wake of the U.S., Israel, and Europe alleging that Iran intends to build nuclear weapons. Iran has systematically refuted these allegations, assuring that its nuclear programme is meant for peaceful use and nuclear

power generation. The U.S., Israel and Europe are adamant that they will not allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons. This avowal contrasts with the positions of Russia and China, who do not want a nuclear armed Iran but opt for other ways to prevent this from happening.

The Arabs also have more doubts than certainty about Iran's alleged intentions to development nuclear weapons. The Western view has been implicitly challenged by the new Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Yukiya Amano of Japan. He told reporters Jul. 3 after his appointment that he did not see "any hard evidence of Iran trying to gain the capability to develop nuclear arms."

Asked by Reuters' Sylvia Westall whether he believed Iran was seeking nuclear weapons capability, Amano, veteran diplomat and senior non-proliferation expert, said: "I don't see any evidence in IAEA official documents about this."

Two days later, in an exclusive interview with Kuwait daily Al-Anba' on Jul. 5, the secretary general of the League of Arab States was asked whether Iran represented a "real threat" to the region. "There is no documented evidence (that proves) the existence of an Iranian military nuclear programme," Musa replied.

"There is only one nuclear state (in the Middle East) that has nuclear weapons, and it is Israel," the Arab League's chief stressed.

Although it started developing nuclear weapons in the mid-sixties, Israel's successive governments have systematically refused to deny or confirm the possession of a nuclear arsenal.

Nevertheless, the Stockholm International Peace Institute (SIPRI) ranks Israel as the sixth world nuclear power on the basis of the number of deployed nuclear warheads in January 2009.

According to SIPRI figures, Israel is second only to the bloc of the five UN Security Council permanent members (U.S., Russia, UK, France, China), with more deployed warheads (80) than India (60-70) and Pakistan (60).

North Korea is believed to have produced enough plutonium to build a small number of nuclear warheads, although it is unclear whether it has manufactured an operational weapon, says SIPRI. ➡

Unlike the U.S., Russia, UK, France and China, Israel is not a signatory to the 1968 Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). However Israel is one of eight states which, as of January this year, possessed between them a total of more than 23,300 nuclear weapons, including operational warheads, spares, those in both active and inactive storage, and intact warheads scheduled for dismantlement, according to SIPRI.

"India and Pakistan, which along with Israel are de facto nuclear weapon states outside the NPT, continue to develop new missile systems capable of delivering nuclear weapons and are also expanding their capacities to produce fissile material," SIPRI reports.

The SIPRI numbers have been questioned, however. For example, former U.S. president Jimmy Carter recently declared: "Israel has 150 nuclear warheads, or more."

Prestigious Egyptian journalist, writer and political analyst Mohamed Hassanein Heykal, who served as a close advisor to late Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser and Anwar Sadat, says that Israel has 200 nuclear warheads.

The U.S. based Arms Control Association (ACA), which was founded in 1971 as a non-partisan organization dedicated to promoting public understanding of and support for effective arms control policies, estimates that Israel possesses between 75 to 200 nuclear warheads.

Egyptian army intelligence sources estimate the number of Israeli nuclear warheads as ranging between 230 and 250. Israel has never denied any of these reports and figures. The Arab-backed Egyptian initiative is based on the fact that the sole nuclear threat in the Middle East is Israel.

A top Egyptian diplomatic source, who asked not to be named, told this reporter that Egyptian officials have always argued that the U.S. "lacks any legitimacy to demand Iran, which has not developed any nuclear weapon, halt its nuclear programme, while treating the only proved nuclear power in the region with silky hands."

The source said "this argument was put on the table" by Mubarak during his meeting with Obama. "

Egypt has always stated that had the U.S. pressed Israel to dismantle its nuclear weapons, it would have been now in a strong and legitimate position to stop any potential Iranian nuclear aspirations," the source said. The source recalled Arab League secretary general Musa's recent statement that "it is a must to free the Middle East of nuclear

## EGYPT REJECTS U.S. NUCLEAR UMBRELLA

weapons - the existence of Israeli nuclear weapons violates the non-proliferation principle and encourages others to have nuclear programmes."

Hessam Zaki, spokesperson of the Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said earlier this month in a public statement that "Egypt has seized every possible opportunity to discuss, at all levels and in all meetings, that the Middle East should be declared a nuclear-free region."

Egyptian officials point out that the U.S.-Egyptian summit has taken place at a point in time that seems appropriate to discuss nuclear disarmament. Obama promised in Prague last April to work for a world free of nuclear weapons. On Jul. 6, the U.S. President signed an understanding with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Moscow aimed at reducing a part of their stockpiles of nuclear weapons within seven years.

The Moscow understanding, which includes intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched missiles is supposed to replace the 1991 Start I (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty I), which expires in December this year.

The White House meeting came also in the middle of a worldwide campaign to reduce nuclear arms as a critical step towards their total abolition, which Japan, the sole country that suffered the consequences of U.S. nuclear bombs in World War II, has been actively promoting.

The 12 million members of non-governmental organization Soka Gakkai International (SGI) in 192 countries have embarked on a broad-based campaign for nuclear abolition. 'The People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition' initiative created by SGI aims to rouse public opinion and help create a global grassroots network of people dedicated to abolishing nuclear weapons.

Another major world campaign for nuclear weapons reductions towards nuclear abolition, called Global Zero, was launched in Paris in December last year by 100 political, military, business, faith and civic leaders cutting across political lines. Their purpose is to shore up the two major nuclear powers in their declared intention to achieve a comprehensive agreement to eliminate all nuclear weapons worldwide through phased and verified reductions. **[IPS | IDN | August 20, 2009]**

# Africa Joins Nuke-Free Club

By Fareed Mahdy in Cairo



Africa, the second-largest continent after Asia, has now become the world's largest nuclear-free zone comprising 53 countries with about a billion people. This means denuclearisation of one of the richest uranium producing regions.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the African Union (AU) announced mid-August that the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (NWFZ) Treaty has come into force.

This was after Burundi became the 28th African state to ratify the treaty Jul. 15. Algeria and Burkina Faso were the first African countries to ratify it in 1998, two years after its signature.

Its entry comes amidst reports of intensive exploitation of uranium mines in Africa by European and Chinese-backed multinational corporations. It now ensures that the southern hemisphere is now free of nuclear weapons.

Under the treaty all parties are required to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements with the IAEA. These agreements are equivalent to those required under the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The treaty also commits parties "to apply the highest standard of security and physical protection of nuclear material, facilities, and equipment to prevent theft and unauthorised use, as well as prohibits armed attacks against nuclear installations within the zone."

The treaty officially declares Africa a nuclear weapons free zone. It was drafted in Johannesburg and Pelindaba in June 1995, and opened for signature in Cairo Apr. 11, 1996.

The treaty is also called the Treaty of Pelindaba after the Pelindaba nuclear research facility near the Hartbeespoort dam west of Pretoria in South Africa. Pelindaba is South Africa's main nuclear research centre run by the Nuclear Energy Corporation of South Africa. This is where South Africa's atomic bombs were built and stored in the 1970s.

"The African NWFZ, similar to other nuclear weapons free zones in Latin America and the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, South Pacific and Central Asia, is an important regional confidence and security-building measure and would contribute to our efforts for a world free from nuclear weapons," said IAEA director general Mohamed ElBaradei. ↻

He said the IAEA welcomed the treaty's support of "the use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes, and trusts that the use of nuclear technologies in Africa would contribute to the continent's economic and social development."

The process of declaring Africa a nuclear weapons free zone was launched at the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU) heads of state and government meeting in Cairo in 1964. The African leaders declared their readiness "to undertake, through an international agreement to be concluded under United Nations auspices, not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons."

The leaders based their position on international agreements such as the UN General Assembly resolution of Dec. 11, 1975 that considered "nuclear- weapon-free zones one of the most effective means for preventing the proliferation, both horizontal and vertical, of nuclear weapons."

The African leaders agreed "the need to take all steps in achieving the ultimate goal of a world entirely free of nuclear weapons, as well as of the obligations of all states to contribute to this end."

They said "the African nuclear-weapon-free zone will constitute an important step towards strengthening the non-proliferation regime, promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, promoting general and complete disarmament and enhancing regional and international peace and security."

The African leaders said an "African nuclear-weapon-free zone will protect African states against possible nuclear attacks on their territories." It would also "keep Africa free of environmental pollution by radioactive wastes and other radioactive matter." The treaty commits members not to dump nuclear waste.

But the leaders also expressed their support for Article 4 of the NPT that recognises "the inalienable right of all states parties to develop research on production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination."

The leaders agreed to promote regional cooperation for the development and practical application of nuclear energy. Africa has some of the richest uranium mines. Many industrialised countries depend on uranium from Africa. France relies entirely on uranium exploitation in Niger to operate its 58 nuclear power plants.

## AFRICA JOINS THE NUKE-FREE CLUB

Other uranium producers on the continent are Algeria, Botswana, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea, Malawi, Mali, Morocco, Namibia, Tanzania, and Zambia. Africa is also reported to be one of the largest nuclear, radioactive and toxic waste-dumping sites, together with Southeast Asia. Somalia is reported to be a major nuclear waste dumping site.

Another treaty creating a zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia came into force Mar. 21 this year. Five countries - Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan - are parties to the treaty.

This treaty was the first of its kind comprising states of the former Soviet Union, and is the first such zone in the Northern Hemisphere. Each of the five states hosted former Soviet nuclear weapons infrastructure. They now confront common problems of environmental damage resulting from the production and testing of Soviet nuclear weapons.

Like the African Treaty, the Central Asian pact forbids development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition or possession of any nuclear explosive device within the zone.

Similar treaties are in force in South America (the treaty of Tlatelolco), the South Pacific (the treaty of Rarotonga), Southeast Asia (the treaty of Bangkok), and Antarctica (the Antarctic treaty). [IPS | IDN | August 20, 2009]

**The treaty also commits parties "to apply the highest standard of security and physical protection of nuclear material, facilities, and equipment to prevent theft and unauthorised use, as well as prohibits armed attacks against nuclear installations within the zone."**



# UN Conference Mulls over Nuke Abolition

By Taro Ichikawa in Tokyo

If a world without nuclear weapons is not to remain distant and just a dream, the nuclear haves must demonstrate political will, leadership and flexibility at the landmark Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference slated for May next year in New York.



UN Photo

This was the upshot of discussions joined by some 90 government officials and academics from 21 countries including the United States, China, France, Germany, Japan and the Middle East at the three-day UN conference on disarmament held in Niigata, a city on the northwest coast of Honshu, the largest island of Japan. The gathering was the 21st in a series of conferences hosted by Japan since 1989.

The annual conference is considered an important forum for frank dialogue and exchange of views on pressing security and disarmament-related issues facing the international community. It also addresses the particular disarmament and non-proliferation concerns of countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The conference, organised by the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs through its Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, took place less than four weeks in run up to the UN Security Council meeting Sep. 24.

U.S. President Barack Obama will preside over the meeting of world leaders providing a high profile political platform for two of the most sensitive issues at the United Nations:

nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. While reaffirming Obama's intention to bring about a nuclear free world, Ambassador Susan Burk, U.S. Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Non-proliferation told participants: "The U.S. cannot do it alone but can take the lead of (other nations)."

Explaining the U.S. strategy, Ambassador Burk said that "the U.S. will lower the military role (of nuclear weapons) by reducing stockpiles" of those weapons and it would request other nuclear states to take similar steps. Further:

"The U.S. will seek to include legally binding verification function in the new agreement which U.S. is currently negotiating with Russia to replace START I. (the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)." The purpose, she said, was to seek an effective treaty.

Katsuhito Asano, deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary of the Japanese government referred to President Obama's speech in Prague April this year, expressing his resolution to work towards nuclear disarmament and remarked that "a groundswell of nuclear disarmament is arising and it is the time to cooperate".

"In order to realise a world free of nuclear weapons, both nuclear states and non-nuclear states need to make efforts," said Hannelore Hoppe, director and deputy to the UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

The conference explored ways and means to translate the vision of a nuclear weapon-free world into concrete actions. Such actions include some preliminary steps aimed at significantly reducing nuclear arsenals, enhancing efforts to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force, and negotiating a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT),

"The dangers posed by existing nuclear weapons and the risks of the proliferation of such weapons or their acquisition by non-state actors collectively pose the gravest challenges to international peace and security," said Hoppe.

Analysing the current global political situation, Yoriko Kawaguchi, a former Foreign Minister of Japan pointed out that "with the U.S. and Russia entering into negotiation for nuclear reduction, recent circumstances surrounding nuclear disarmament are in stark contrast with the situation several years ago". Kawaguchi, who co-chairs the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND) expressed the conviction that "we need confidence-building among nuclear weapon states, ➡



drafting of law-abiding international rule, and discussions reflecting security circumstances in each region". In an interview with the Chugoku Shimbun, a Hiroshima based daily newspaper, Libran N. Cabactulan, the Philippines Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, who will preside over NPT Review Conference next year, said:

"Political will and leadership are critical to its success." He was happy that "these essential elements have been growing."

Cabactulan welcomed in particular the effort by President Obama for the U.S. ratification of the CTBT. "His enthusiasm is providing momentum for the success of the NPT Review Conference," said Cabactulan.

At the same time, he emphasised the need for advancing discussion on all three pillars of the NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. He also pointed out that, due to the lack of progress in regard to agreements made at past conferences, "signatories have been feeling some dissatisfaction".

These agreements include the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East as well as the 13 disarmament measures including "an unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon states to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenal".

Besides discussing the prospects of next year's NPT Review Conference, the Niigata conference addressed topics ranging from denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula to the role of the media and civil society organizations in disarmament.

Referring to the ongoing diplomatic effort to achieve a denuclearized Korean peninsula, a Chinese official said there should be a joint effort -- by the US, South Korea, Japan, China and Russia - rather than focusing on China's role.

"China has played and will continue to play its role in achieving the goal," said Jiang Yingfeng, an official from Arms Control and Disarmament Division of China's Foreign Ministry. "But we must acknowledge the importance of the other participating countries, as well as of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's desire to talk directly with the United States."

Democratic People's Republic of Korea is the official name of North Korea.

## UN CONFERENCE MULLS OVER NUKE ABOLITION

In a keynote speech, Kanat B. Saudabayev, Kazakhstan's Secretary of State, tasked with nuclear non-proliferation said that "nuclear weapon states must set a role model for renouncing nuclear weapons by reducing nuclear weapons".

Recalling that Kazakhstan was a constituent republic of the Soviet Union, Saudabayev informed participants: "Our country sustained serious damage as a consequence of repeated nuclear experiments during former Soviet era and we have voluntarily begun to move forward on the path toward nuclear abolition. Nuclear weapon states must set a role model by reducing nuclear weapons."

The conference also discussed the issue of 'nuclear umbrella, according to the Japanese Communist Party's newspaper 'The AKAHATA'. Japan enjoys U.S. protection through the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

Former Foreign Minister of Japan and co-chairperson of ICNND Kawaguchi reportedly remarked: "How can Japan and South Korea, who are facing a 'serious threat' from North Korea, lower the role of nuclear umbrella without destabilizing the safety of their own nations?"

Conditions for lifting nuclear deterrence, she said, were the improvement of international security circumstances, and dependence on weapons apart from nuclear weapons. She pleaded for sticking to the "nuclear umbrella" till those conditions were fulfilled.

A civil society representative from New Zealand remarked that "countries should forego the 'nuclear umbrella' by agreeing legally binding 'negative security assurances' that pledge not to nuke non-nuclear states". NATO member countries such as Belgium and Italy were stepping away from the nuclear umbrella just like nuclear free New Zealand, he pointed out.

The city of Niigata -- reportedly considered one of four targets of atom bomb by the U.S. besides Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Kokura -- hosted the conference for the first time. Previous meetings had been held six times in Kyoto, three times in Hiroshima where the first ever nuclear bomb was dropped, two times in Nagasaki and one time each in Sendai, Akita, Kanazawa, Osaka, Yokohama and Saitama. **[IDN-InDepthNews | August 30, 2009]**

# Latin America: "The More Guns, the More Violence"

By Emilio Godoy in Mexico

Traffic in light weapons and small arms is one of Latin America's major disarmament concerns, because they fuel urban violence, especially in countries like Mexico, Guatemala and Brazil.

This is one of the issues on the agenda of the 62nd Annual Conference for Non-Governmental Organizations associated with the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI/NGO), attended by 1,700 delegates from 75 countries under the banner "For Peace and Development: Disarm Now!"

"These weapons, trafficked illegally for huge profits, are used by common criminals and organised crime to attack society and the members of the security forces," Mexican Foreign Secretary Patricia Espinosa said Wednesday at the start of the conference, which is being held at a former convent near the historic centre of the Mexican capital.

Small arms are a particular scourge in Mexico, because of the widespread activities of drug cartels. An undetermined number of weapons are acquired on the legal market in the United States, or are smuggled in from Central America.

Defence Ministry statistics indicate that between 2000 and 2006 a total of 257,993 firearms were destroyed, 723 lost, 2,367 stolen, 238,838 registered and 31,931 transferred between owners or jurisdictions.

Since taking office in late 2006, conservative President Felipe Calderón has deployed thousands of soldiers around the country to fight drug trafficking.

However, since then drug-related killings have soared, leaving over 14,000 people dead up to August this year, according to unofficial counts. Behind these deaths are the small and light arms which provide the drug mafias with most of their fire power.

Worldwide there are more than 500 million light arms in circulation, an average of one for every 12 people. They were instrumental in 46 out of the 49 major conflicts fought since 1990, and were responsible for the deaths of four million people, most of them civilians, women and children, according to the United Nations.

It is estimated that only about half the global trade in small arms is legal. Furthermore, legally exported weapons often end up on the black market.

Illegal dealing in small arms is estimated to net between two billion and 10 billion dollars a year, according to the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), founded in 1998 and made up of 800 NGOs from 120 countries.

Nearly seven million rifles and handguns are manufactured every year, mainly in the United States and the European Union.

To tackle the problem, a United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was held Jul. 9-20, 2001 at UN headquarters in New York.

"In Mexico, armed violence and violence against women are severe problems. The more guns, the more violence," Héctor Guerra, IANSA representative in this country, told IPS.

IANSA is proposing legislation to ban or revoke firearm licenses for people convicted of using guns to commit gender violence.

The high levels of violent crime in this country of over 107 million people have had an impact on life expectancy, shortening it by more than half a year, according to a study by researchers from the United States, Canada and Switzerland published late July in the British journal *Criminology and Criminal Justice*.

Mexico is a keen supporter of efforts toward an international agreement on the small arms trade and fighting illegal arms traffic. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is another concern at the DPI/NGO Conference, which runs through Friday. This is the second consecutive year that the meeting has been held outside of UN headquarters in New York.

In his opening address, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said "there are over 20,000 nuclear weapons around the world. Many of them are still on hair-trigger alert, threatening our own survival." ☞

"There can be no development without peace and no peace without development. Disarmament can provide the means for both," Ban said.

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START-I) signed in 1991 by the United States and the then Soviet Union, which imposed a cap on the nuclear arsenals of both powers, expires in December.

On Sept. 24, a special session of the UN Security Council will discuss global nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

A conference to review the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in force since 1970, will also meet in New York in May 2010.

**U.S. activist Jody Williams, winner of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for her campaign against land mines, told reporters she would "press for a convention on nuclear weapons," because "if we continue to talk about the eventual elimination of these weapons," they will never actually be banned.**

The Latin American and Caribbean region is a nuclear weapons-free zone under the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, better known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which was signed in Mexico City in 1967. Mexico was one of the sponsors of the ban.

The UN strategy for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons proposes that disarmament must enhance the security of nations, be reliably verified, be rooted in legal obligations, be visible to the public and anticipate emerging dangers from other weapons, Ban said.

Williams said that if, at this critical juncture, NGOs did not step in and push for the abolition of nuclear weapons, the moment would be lost, and a new, uncontrolled and terrifying arms race might ensue - a frightening prospect for the future. In Guerra's view, this week's conference should conclude with a strong declaration against all kinds of arms, particularly small arms and light weapons. [IPS | Sep. 10, 2009]

# Obama Seeks UN Backing

By Thalif Deen in New York

When Barack Obama chaired a summit meeting of the Security Council on Thursday (Sep. 24) - a historic first for a U.S. president - his primary motive was to push for his ambitious, long-term agenda for "a world without nuclear weapons".

A resolution adopted unanimously by the 15 members of the UN's most powerful political body expressed grave concern about the threat of nuclear proliferation and the need for international action to prevent it.

Providing specific time frames, he said, the next 12 months "will be absolutely critical in determining whether this resolution and our overall efforts to stop the spread and use of nuclear weapons are successful".

"Today, the Security Council endorsed a global effort to lock down all vulnerable nuclear materials within four years," Obama told the heads of state participating in the meeting.

The United States, he affirmed, will host a summit meeting next April to advance this goal further and help all nations achieve it.

Obama singled out Iran and North Korea, urging "full compliance" on existing Security Council resolutions that call on both countries to cease their nuclear weapons programmes. Still, he said, "this is not about singling out individual nations. It's about standing up for the rights of all nations who do live up to their (nuclear) responsibilities."

The resolution adopted Thursday, however, did not mention either Iran or North Korea by name, although most statements in the Council did. "That was perhaps the price paid for getting the support of China and Russia for the adoption of the resolution," an Asian diplomat told IPS.

Both veto-wielding permanent members of the Security Council have continued to be protective of Iran and North Korea primarily because of their political, economic and military interests with both would-be nuclear powers. ➡

## OBAMA SEEKS UN BACKING

"If Iran and North Korea were singled out in the resolution," the diplomat said, "it was very unlikely the United States would have had a unanimous resolution."

But several speakers continued to condemn North Korea and Iran in their statements - perhaps to compensate for the shortcoming in the resolution.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy pointedly said: "We are facing two major proliferation crises, in Iran and North Korea."

Year after year, he said, they have been worsening. "How, before the eyes of the world, could we justify meeting without tackling them?"

British Prime Minister Gordon Brown proposed that countries should form a global bargain on nuclear weapons, including tougher sanctions on countries such as Iran and North Korea, while offering civil nuclear power to non-nuclear states ready to renounce plans for nuclear weapons. He also called for a commitment from countries with nuclear weapons to reduce their arsenals.

The five declared nuclear powers - all permanent members of the Security Council - are the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia. The undeclared nuclear powers include Pakistan, India, Israel and North Korea (with Iran knocking at the door).

John Burroughs, executive director of the New York-based Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy, told IPS that U.S. Ambassador Susan Rice, who piloted the resolution, was clear that the resolution would not be about particular countries.

But this could have been worked out with Russia and China ahead of time, he said.

"From my perspective, whether the countries are named is a false controversy. The resolution is about norms applicable to all countries, and it's supposed to be also a resolution about disarmament as well as non-proliferation, and it is to some degree," Burroughs said.

So it is not intended to be a resolution about particular proliferation situations.

The resolution also makes perfectly clear, without naming the countries, that they should

comply with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

"Why not have a controversy about why countries that have not complied with disarmament commitments are not named, to go along with the controversy about naming Iran and North Korea?" Burroughs asked.

Dr. Ian Anthony, research coordinator at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), one of the world's best known arms control and disarmament think tanks, said the resolution establishes a framework for international cooperation to tackle a complicated set of problems over an extended period.

The willingness of the Security Council to remain engaged in implementing this programme of work will be seen by the wider UN membership as a key indicator of whether they should play an active role in relevant projects, he said.

"The main challenge for the Security Council will be to sustain their engagement and to implement the package of measures listed in the resolution in the face of competing priorities and urgent challenges in the economic and financial sphere, climate change and in relation to other urgent issues," Anthony told IPS.

Burroughs said that while the resolution did not name Iran or North Korea, it makes quite clear that the Security Council will retain its role in policing compliance with non-proliferation obligations.

But he pointed out that the resolution still lacks a call for a halt to production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons by all states possessing nuclear arsenals, pending negotiation of a treaty.

"It appears that China prevented its inclusion," Burroughs said.

A halt to production of fissile materials in South Asia would be significant because it would essentially end the serious quantitative nuclear arms race there, he added.

"India and Pakistan are the only states known to be currently producing materials for weapons (Israel might be), but China may want to preserve the option," he added.

SIPRI's Anthony argued that the discovery that not all states entered into agreements in good faith was a serious blow to the basic principle on which arms control rests, ➡

namely that agreed rules of self-restraint would be respected by all parties under their own responsibility.

In addition, he said, the threats posed by non-state actors planning acts of mass impact terrorism were not historically a part of arms control discussions.

"Arms control has tried to adapt to changes in the security environment by increasing confidence in compliance with existing agreements and by denying groups planning mass impact terrorist attacks access to the most dangerous capabilities," he added. Thursday's Security Council meeting indicates that the United States wants to exercise responsible leadership within a multilateral framework.

"This is the best way to try and establish a fair, inclusive and effective implementation of the multitude of new legal, political and operational tools created in recent years, many of which are noted in the preamble to the Security Council Resolution," Anthony added.

In a historic speech he made in Prague last April, Obama spoke of a world without nuclear weapons.

Burroughs said one point found in the Prague speech is notably lacking in the resolution: reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in security strategies.

Nor are there innovations regarding arms control/disarmament or the role of the Security Council in that regard.

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**"The main challenge for the Security Council will be to sustain their engagement and to implement the package of measures listed in the resolution in the face of competing priorities and urgent challenges in the economic and financial sphere, climate change and in relation to other urgent issues."**

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## **OBAMA SEEKS UN BACKING**

For example, he said, there is no initiation of a disarmament process involving states possessing nuclear arsenals; no establishment of a subsidiary body on non-proliferation and disarmament, or support for reform of the Council to make it more effective in responding to violations of non-proliferation and disarmament obligations.

Additionally, there are no steps to fulfill the Council's responsibility under the UN Charter to propose plans for disarmament.

In contrast, there is detailed elaboration and development of non-proliferation and anti-terrorism measures.

In sum, while the resolution robustly asserts and develops the Security Council's role in preventing the acquisition of nuclear weapons by additional states and by terrorists, its current significance lies mostly in the signal that the Obama administration intends to pursue the existing arms control agenda.

To live up to Obama's Prague commitment, the resolution will need to pave the way for a more ambitious effort, not only to contain the spread of nuclear weapons, but to end reliance on them by existing nuclear powers and set in motion the process of their elimination, Burroughs declared. **[IPS | Sep. 24, 2009]**

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**"Arms control has tried to adapt to changes in the security environment by increasing confidence in compliance with existing agreements and by denying groups planning mass impact terrorist attacks access to the most dangerous capabilities."**

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# Why We Should Abolish Nuclear Weapons

By Hiromichi Umebayashi in Tokyo  
Founder and special advisor of Peace Depot, Inc. Japan

Why should we abolish nuclear weapons?

This apparently naive question seems to have become a matter of hot debate. In Japan, which suffered nuclear holocaust in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there is a profound desire for nuclear abolition that derives from its first-hand experience of the appalling damage caused by nuclear weapons.

Yet this does not seem to be enough to constitute a successful argument for "a world free of nuclear weapons".

The effort to bring about a nuclear abolition must be indivisibly and essentially integrated with the challenge of creating a more equitable, just, and humane global society.

When the idea of "a world free of nuclear weapons" resurfaced as practical goal after new anti-nuke initiatives emerged in the United States, I found myself confronting once again the question: Why?

The need for a global solution to problems like poverty and climate change is a given, as if tacitly mandated by the standards that guide civilized human society. Nuclear abolition, in contrast, tends to be confined within the category of weapons linked to national security. It is not seen as a moral and global human issue. To succeed, the nuclear abolition movement must be brought into a wider sphere of people's thinking.

Ten years ago I translated into Japanese a book titled, "Fast Track to Zero Nuclear Weapons" by Robert D. Green, a former British Navy Commander. A statement in the book has continued to intrigue me. The author, explaining the analogy between the campaign to abolish slavery two hundred years ago and the nuclear abolition movement,



wrote that the campaign to abolish slavery succeeded because "it focused on the illegality of slavery, not just its cruelty."

The lesson of Green's study is that in history the agonies and bitter struggles that human society undergoes can generate the political will to enact important laws, national and international.

Even when compromises are necessary to get such laws passed, such legislation will contain legal norms, language, and a conceptual framework that can be applied in the effort to usher in a new era.

The preambles of international treaties or conventions banning or limiting weapons invoke basic legal norms and principles. However, there is a striking difference between instruments limiting nuclear weapons and those concerning other classes of armaments.

The Biological Weapons Convention, Chemical Weapons Convention, Anti-Personnel Mines Convention, and the recent Cluster Munitions Convention all contain a clear exposition of the human and moral basis of the prohibition, which, they argue, is a prerequisite to a civilised world and subject to the laws dictated by human conscience.

Surprisingly, this is not the case with nuclear weapons treaties, such as the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

I trust that all readers would naturally assume that the principles underlying bans on biological and chemical weapons would also be prescribed as rightful norms in treaties on nuclear arms, but this is not at all the case. Nowhere in the NPT or CTBT is there a similar invocation of human and moral standards. Can we really achieve a world free of nuclear weapons with such weak legal footing?

We know why this is the case. It is because euphemisms are needed in order to persuade nuclear weapon possessors to join such instruments to bind themselves. As long as we accept this practice, I fear we may fail to establish norms that recognize the real nature of nuclear weapons and their implications for future generations of humanity.

We would also be failing to envision a nuclear weapons-free world as a better one for human society. *(Continued in page 59 bottom)* ↻



# "Let Us Make Nuclear Abolition a Reality"

Ramesh Jaura interviews  
SGI President Daisaku Ikeda

A world free of nuclear weapons is no longer a utopia. There is more than one reason to believe that it is a concrete possibility, says Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Buddhist association, Soka Gakkai International (SGI).

"In recent years, we have seen important, groundbreaking examples of humanitarian ideals surmounting military logic and narrowly defined national interests to bring new disarmament accords into existence," says Ikeda explaining the rationale behind his optimism.

"In recent years, we have seen important, groundbreaking examples of humanitarian ideals surmounting military logic and narrowly defined national interests to bring new disarmament accords into existence," says Ikeda. "Rather than asking ourselves whether nuclear abolition is possible, we need to ask ourselves what we can do to make this a reality in our time."

Ikeda formulated a five-point plan early September aimed at nuclear abolition.

"Through my proposal, I want to encourage the leaders not only of the nuclear-weapon states but also of those countries that rely on the nuclear weapons of others for their security to consider the present and future danger presented by nuclear weapons," the SGI president says in a *joint interview with IPS and IDN-InDepthNews*.

Following are excerpts from the interview conducted by email after the UN Security Council session on nuclear abolition Sep. 24 chaired by U.S. President Barack Obama.

**QUESTION:** President Obama spelt out his vision of a world free of nuclear weapons last April in Prague. However, the U.S. President expressed doubts in his speech in Prague that a nuke-free world would be ushered in in "our lifetime". Would you share that view? In your proposal you ask "the world's people to clearly manifest their will for the outlawing of nuclear weapons and to establish, by the year 2015, the international norm that will serve as the foundation for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC)."

DAISAKU IKEDA: We stand today at a critical juncture, one that will determine whether or not humankind can make genuine progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Rather than asking ourselves whether nuclear abolition is possible, we need to ask ourselves what we can do to make this a reality in our time.

Through my proposal, I want to encourage the leaders not only of the nuclear-weapon states but also those countries that rely on the nuclear weapons of others for their security to consider the present and future danger presented by nuclear weapons. At the same time, I urge that we all understand that the real "enemy" is not nuclear weapons, nor the states that possess or would develop them.

The real enemy is the way of thinking that justifies nuclear weapons. It is our readiness to see others eliminated when they stand in the way of the fulfilment of our desires and ambitions. This was the underlying message of the declaration, issued some 52 years ago by my predecessor and mentor, second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda, calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

As you note, President Obama has expressed his determination to work for a world without nuclear weapons. At the same time, he has questioned whether this goal will be realized in our lifetime. If the leaders of the nuclear-weapon states and of all countries take concrete action on the basis of a shared sense of responsibility and - most importantly - if there is consistent pressure from the world's people acting in solidarity, what might seem impossible now can certainly be made possible.

The five-year period to 2015, and in particular the eight-month period to next year's NPT (non-proliferation treaty) review conference, will be decisive. To establish a solid beachhead for a world without nuclear weapons, we need to expand global popular commitment towards this goal. ➡

## "LET US MAKE NUCLEAR ABOLITION A REALITY"

**Q: The document released Sep. 8 - 'Building Global Solidarity Toward Nuclear Abolition' - points out that the path to the adoption of an NWC is likely to be a difficult one, not least because the entrenched perceptions of military security stand in the way. Do you see any realistic possibility of "humanitarian" ideals taking an upper hand over military and money-making ideologies?**

DI: In recent years, we have seen important, groundbreaking examples of humanitarian ideals surmounting military logic and narrowly defined national interests to bring new disarmament accords into existence. I am referring of course to the treaties banning landmines and cluster weapons. Both were realized through international campaigns based on the collaborative efforts of NGOs working together with governments seriously committed to disarmament.

I am calling for the establishment of a clear international norm condemning nuclear weapons. This will provide the basis for a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting these most inhumane of all weapons. It is clear that the way forward to an NWC will not be easy. But there are signs of new awareness among the world's political leaders that are cause for hope.

The first is that we now hear more voices calling for nuclear abolition from a realistic assessment of the dangers they pose. These include former high-level officials of the nuclear-weapon states. I think the confluence of this "realist" approach with more traditional peace and humanitarian antinuclear perspectives presents an important opportunity to make progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

The second is the fact that, in the 64 years since the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons have never been used. This points to the steadily solidifying awareness that nuclear weapons are essentially unusable for military purposes, even if we include the implicit threat underlying deterrence as a form of "use".

I think this understanding is shared to a greater or lesser degree by the political leaders of the nuclear-weapon states. In order to outlaw nuclear weapons, we will need to raise the visibility of the issue internationally to a far higher degree than was the case even for the movements to ban landmines and cluster weapons. Civil society needs to come together to create a popular groundswell for nuclear abolition.

**Q: The document calls upon the five declared nuclear-weapon states to announce their commitment to "a shared vision of a world without nuclear weapons." What would you expect such a shared vision to look like? And what distinct outcome would you expect from the NPT review conference next May?**

DI: Vision gives birth to action. This is why it is epoch-making that the United States has offered a vision of nuclear abolition. What is important now is for all the nuclear-weapon states to earnestly debate the significance of this vision and to find ways of sharing it. A shared vision provides the common foundation for taking the next concrete steps forward.

In this regard, there are signs of progress. A few days ago, on Sep.24, the UN Security Council meeting on non-proliferation and disarmament adopted a resolution expressing the resolve to realise a world without nuclear weapons. In light of the fact that all five of the nuclear-weapon states participated as permanent members of the Security Council and that Security Council resolutions are legally binding, this is extremely important.

If this resolution can serve as an impetus to the nuclear-weapon states to start taking concrete and concerted action, they will be taking the lead towards the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Exercising this kind of leadership is their solemn obligation under the NPT. At the same time, it is clearly the only way to encourage the countries presently outside the NPT regime to move towards nuclear arms reduction and elimination. The solidarity that arises from this kind of responsible action will also accelerate efforts to respond to such global challenges as poverty and climate change.

Perhaps the greatest single reason to expect the nuclear-weapon states to play this kind of role is the emergence in recent years of the realistic possibility of terrorism using nuclear weapons. Needless to say, deterrence is not possible - meaningless in fact - against this type of threat. The greatest and indeed only defence against the threat of nuclear terror is the strictly verified abolition of nuclear weapons. Only this will obviate the danger that nuclear weapons will be stolen or nuclear weapons technologies leaked.

In my proposal, I urge the five nuclear-weapon states to undertake the following three commitments at next year's NPT review conference: 1) a nuclear weapons moratorium; 2) substantively enhanced transparency regarding their nuclear capabilities; and 3) deliberations on the absolute minimum number of nuclear weapons on the path to abolition. Of course, there is no need to wait until next year to commit to this path. ☞

A moratorium on further development or modernization of their nuclear arsenals in particular would be a critical step towards nuclear abolition. From the perspective of the world's citizens, there is no possible justification for maintaining the capacity to destroy the world dozens of times over, much less for further refining of this capability through technological development. Agreement to this would certainly have an important positive impact on the discourse surrounding the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT).

**Q: The document also calls upon the UN to establish a panel of experts on nuclear abolition, strengthening collaborative relations with civil society in the disarmament process. How would you evaluate UN's present relations with the civil society in the field of nuclear disarmament? What role do you envisage for SGI in particular and the civil society in general in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons?**

DI: The world has changed greatly since the United Nations was established in 1945. In recent years, there has been an increased appreciation of the need to heed the voices of the world's citizens. Disarmament involves issues that are of central concern to states. If the specialised knowledge and communicative capacities of civil society can be fully utilised in this field, it would greatly advance the cause of disarmament.

I think the fact that the annual conference of NGOs affiliated with the UN's Department of Public Information, convened earlier this month in Mexico City, for the first time ever took up disarmament as its theme symbolises this trend.

Nor can we overlook the increasing importance that has been accorded to the concept of "human security" in recent years. As civil society has been clearly pointing out, there are critical gaps in traditional conceptualisations of national security - namely, adequate consideration of the impact of political decisions in the lives of people.

There are signs that governments are starting to look to civil society as partners in developing and implementing new modalities of security. The same can be said for the United Nations.

In my proposal, I stressed the importance of establishing a clear international norm for nuclear abolition, and bringing together the power of ordinary citizens to this end. I think civil society has a special role to play in resolving issues that involve the complex interplay of national interests and are therefore not amenable to solution solely through state or government initiatives.

It is crucial that civil society provide opportunities for people to become more aware and awakened to their capacity to be agents of change. People who share the common aspiration for a world free of nuclear weapons need to come together and coordinate their efforts based on a deepened sense of solidarity.

Drawing from a tradition of antinuclear activism reaching back more than five decades, the SGI will continue to work to promote this kind of empowerment within and through civil society. We will collaborate with other NGOs to facilitate the development of a broad-based network for nuclear abolition. [IDN-InDepthNews | Sep. 29, 2009]

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## WHY WE SHOULD ABOLISH NUCLEAR WEAPONS

(Continued from page 56)

A possible step in this direction would be an international instrument to outlaw the use and the threat of use of nuclear weapons, as discussed in a recent article by Rebecca Johnson (Disarmament Diplomacy, Spring 2009).

A so-called Ottawa process in which civil society and like-minded nations collaborate would be a feasible approach.

We also need to fully articulate how the world today is distorted by the habit of sabre rattling and gun diplomacy, the most prominent example of which has been the threat to use nuclear weapons.

The norms enshrined in the United Nations Charter to pursue "friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples" and "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without discrimination" will never be attained in a world dominated by the horror of nuclear weapons.

The path towards a nuclear weapons-free world should also enable us to envision the new, more humane society embodied in such norms. – [COPYRIGHT IPS | Sep. 2009]

# Clinton Calls for Strengthened IAEA Powers

By Jim Lobe in Washington

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called on Oct. 21 for strengthening the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to inspect suspected nuclear-related facilities and ruled out lifting sanctions against North Korea until it took "verifiable and irreversible" steps toward denuclearisation.

In what was billed as a major policy address, Clinton also called for Iran to take "prompt action" in implementing a proposed plan to ship most of its low-enriched uranium (LEU) to Russia for reprocessing so that it can be used to produce medical isotopes at a reactor in Tehran.

Iranian diplomats reportedly gave tentative approval to the plan in talks with the U.S. and other major powers in Vienna on Oct. 21. "Thwarting the nuclear ambitions of North Korea and Iran is critical to the shoring up of the [nuclear] non-proliferation regime," she declared.

She also reiterated President Barack Obama's intention to submit the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) for ratification by the U.S. Senate and to conclude a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) with Russia that will slash the nuclear stockpiles of both countries when the existing agreement expires in December. Together the two countries possess 96 percent of the world's nuclear weapons.

"We are under no illusions that this START agreement will persuade Iran and North Korea to end their illicit nuclear activities," she told the U.S. Institute for Peace, a government-supported think tank. "But it will demonstrate that the United States is living up to its Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) obligation to work toward nuclear disarmament."

"In doing so, it will help convince the rest of the international community to strengthen

non-proliferation controls and tighten the screws on states that flout their non-proliferation commitments," she added.

Since last April, when Obama unveiled his vision of a nuclear-weapons-free world in a major address in Prague, his administration has made clear it considers non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament to be one of its highest foreign policy priorities.

To underline its importance, Obama himself chaired a UN Security Council meeting – becoming the first U.S. president to do so – devoted exclusively to non-proliferation and disarmament Sep. 24. He also announced that he will host a global summit on nuclear security in Washington next April, one month before diplomats from around the world are set to gather in Vienna for talks to review the NPT, including ways that it could be strengthened.

While Clinton added little to what the administration has already said about these issues, she made clear that strengthening the existing non-proliferation regime – especially the powers of the IAEA - was at the top of the U.S. agenda.

"The International Atomic Energy Agency doesn't have the tools or authority to carry out its mission effectively," she said. "We saw this in the institution's failure to detect Iran's covert enrichment plant and Syria's reactor project."

The IAEA's additional protocol, an optional provision for NPT signatories that permits the agency to carry out aggressive, short-notice inspections at nuclear sites that it monitors, "should be made universal through concerted efforts to persuade key holdout states to join", she said. In addition to making "full use of existing verification authorities, including special inspections", the IAEA "should also be given new authorities, including the ability to investigate suspected nuclear-weapons-related activities, even when no nuclear materials are present", she added.



Credit: Wikimedia Commons

Moreover, NPT members should also consider adopting "automatic penalties for violations of safeguards agreements – for example, suspending all international cooperation or IAEA technical cooperation projects until compliance has been restored", she went on, noting that, "the international community's record of enforcing compliance in recent years is unacceptable".

On North Korea, which withdrew from the NPT in 2003 and tested a nuclear device in 2006 and again last May, Clinton said "current sanctions will not be relaxed until Pyongyang takes verifiable, irreversible steps toward complete denuclearisation" pursuant to its 2005 pledge to do so in exchange for a number of economic and political incentives.

The pledge was made in the context of the so-called "six-party talks" that also included the U.S., China, South Korea, Japan, and Russia. She added that Washington remained willing to meet on a bilateral basis with Pyongyang within the six-party framework. "But North Korea's return to the negotiating table is not enough," she stressed.

"Its leaders should be under no illusion that the United States will ever have normal, sanctions-free relations with a nuclear-armed North Korea," she added.

On Iran, which has not renounced the NPT, she also stressed that Washington "will continue to engage both multilaterally and bilaterally to discuss the full range of issues that have divided Iran and the United States for too long".

But, she stressed, "The process of engagement cannot be open-ended." In that context, she called for "prompt action" in implementing the accord that was the subject of negotiations between Tehran and the so-called P5+1 countries – the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany – at the IAEA in Vienna this week. Iran's representatives reportedly said Tehran would make a final decision on the plan by Friday.

Most analysts here believe that, by sending most of Iran's LEU stockpile out of the country and reprocessing it in a form that would be very difficult to convert to weapons use, the plan could buy more time for negotiating an agreement that would permit Tehran to maintain its enrichment programme under the NPT subject to strict verification and inspection provisions of the kind that Clinton suggested should be made universal.

Apart from strengthening the non-proliferation regime, however, she also stressed that the existing nuclear-weapons states should also take steps to reassure non-nuclear states

## CLINTON CALLS FOR STRENGTHENED IAEA

that they are committed to eventual disarmament.

"We can't afford to continue relying on recycled Cold War thinking. We are sincere in our pursuit of a secure, peaceful world without nuclear weapons," she said.

Clinton added, however, that "until we reach that point of the horizon where the last nuclear weapon has been eliminated, we need to reinforce the domestic consensus that America will maintain the nuclear infrastructure needed to sustain a safe and effective deterrent without nuclear testing."

To secure Senate ratification of the CTBT, which was narrowly rejected in 1999 after President Bill Clinton submitted it, the administration will have to persuade at least seven Republicans to back it.

Many analysts believe that will be possible only if the administration agrees to develop new warheads to replace its current arsenal. **[IPS | October 21, 2009]**



# Disarmament: Closer to Making Utopia Feasible?

By Taro Ichikawa in Hiroshima

"What we see here is tragic, but even more tragic is all that was lost without a trace," said Yoriko Kawaguchi as tears welled up in her eyes. She had just completed a tour of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Kawaguchi is a former foreign minister of Japan. Together with the erstwhile foreign minister of Australia, Gareth Evans, she co-chairs the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND).

The Commission visited ahead of its meeting Oct. 18-20 in Hiroshima, the Peace Memorial Museum that conveys the horror of the atomic bombing, heard the testimony of one of the "Hibakusha" (atomic bomb victims) and met with Hiroshima community groups concerned with the human dimension of nuclear weapons.

Kawaguchi and the other 26 members of the ICNND were deeply moved learning about the experience of 78-year old Hiroshima resident Akihiro Takahashi, who is one of the aged surviving atom bomb victims.

Equally impressed were they by an impassioned encounter with NGO representatives in Hiroshima at a round-table discussion hosted by the ICNND Japan NGO Network on the Commission's final report.

The NGOs representatives pointed out that if the final ICNND report turned out be passive, it would not be acceptable to the NGO community. The final report, they said, should be remembered by posterity for recommending 'no first use', 'nuclear-weapons-free zone in North East Asia' and a Nuclear Weapons Convention. If nuclear weapon states adopted 'no use' policy at early stage, such a 'doctrinal shift' would make a big step towards a world free from nuclear weapons, said one NGO representative.



Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park | Credit: Wikimedia Commons

"I think it is important to look at ground zero with your eyes, listening to atom bomb survivors' testimonies with your ears, and pondering the issue of nuclear bomb with your heart. In this sense, I want to express my respect to ICNND members who decided to come to Hiroshima," said Tomihisa Taue, Mayor of Nagasaki city that was also atom-bombed. "We all must work for achieving nuclear abolition while atom bomb survivors are still alive," he argued.

Though the Commission's co-chairs and members appreciated the non-governmental organisations' deepest wish for the elimination of all nuclear weapons and the realization of a genuinely peaceful international community, they argued that a report which nuclear states cannot put into practice would be meaningless.

The issue of nuclear weapons was not that simple. "It is a different animal from other like land mines, remarked a Commission member." ➡



The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) in over 70 countries turned out to be successful. The Campaign was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its efforts to bring about the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty.

Nevertheless, after listening to NGO opinions, one Commission member said: "I feel that I should be sitting on your side. After all, what moves reality is the power emanating from citizens and passion."

ICNND co-chairs assured that the Commission aims to reinvigorate the global debate on nuclear disarmament and on preventing the further spread of nuclear weapons to other parts of the world.

They pointed out that though launched and supported by the governments of Australia and Japan, the Commission is an independent global panel that not only includes former heads of state and senior ministers, military strategists and disarmament experts, but is also backed by an advisory board of international experts. Besides, it works in collaboration with research centres from around the world.

Presenting the conclusion of the three-day closed-door deliberations in a joint statement Oct. 20, Kawaguchi and Evans said the Commission and its advisory board members had held intensive discussions to finalise its draft report, which is to be issued early next year in advance of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

Since the report is to help build an international consensus in advance of the May 2010 NPT Review Conference, there was "a particularly strong focus on strategic aspects of moves to reduce the numbers of nuclear weapons world-wide, and to achieve the conditions which might permit the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons," the joint statement said.

It added: "Commission members strongly supported the report's main focus -- a three-phased action agenda aimed at delivering on its key recommendations: Short Term to 2012 -- achieving initial benchmarks; Medium Term to 2025 -- getting to the minimization point, and; Long Term beyond 2025 -- getting to zero."

The statement stressed: "The Commission will undertake a range of outreach activities to brief key government and non-government stakeholders following the launch of its report in 2010." Knowledgeable sources say that the ICNND report fails to specify the target year for total abolition of nuclear weapons.

## CLOSER TO MAKING UTOPIA POSSIBLE?

A draft of the report obtained by the Kyodo news agency prior to the meeting suggested a reduction of nuclear arsenal from 20,000 at present to "1,000 or less worldwide" by 2025. Though no document has been made public, an article in Hiroshima's 'Chugoku Shimbun' newspaper quoted an informed source saying: "It appears that the target numbers of 1000 in the final draft receded to 2000."

Confirming this, the Malaysian news agency Bernama, reported Oct. 23 that in Hiroshima, Commission members had "agreed to drastically reduce the number of nuclear warheads in the world from the current more than 20,000 to an unspecified level. The level is presumed to be higher than the initial target of 1,000 or fewer stipulated in an earlier draft report by the commission."

Quoting Kyodo, Bernama went on to say: "Behind the ICNND's change of heart was strong opposition from some nuclear-armed states to reducing their nukes at the same rate as Russia and the United States, according to sources close to the commission. Such states insisted their stockpiles are already kept at minimum levels."

"Another possible stumbling block for ambitious reductions brought up in the meeting was the physical capability for dismantling nuclear warheads, Yoriko Kawaguchi, co-chairwoman of the commission, told reporters after the conference. She was apparently referring to a lack of dismantling facilities for nuclear arms, as only one plant in the United States and two in Russia are currently believed to exist," Bernama added.

"As for nuclear warheads which we are not able to dismantle, we will make sure that their nuclear fissile materials will not be reused by locking them up in safely guarded environments," Kawaguchi was quoted saying.

In response to the ICNND goals announced following the final meeting, representatives of the Mayors for Peace, an international peace organization headed by the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, expressed disappointment saying that the targets are far from sufficient.

As the Mayors for Peace group hopes to achieve a nuclear-free world while survivors of the two atomic bombings are still alive, the organization seeks the adoption of a disarmament protocol targeting the elimination of nuclear weapons by 2020 at the upcoming NPT review conference scheduled for next year. ➡

## CLOSER TO MAKING UTOPIA POSSIBLE?

Commenting the report, 70-year old Haruko Moritaki of Hiroshima Alliance for Nuclear Weapons Abolition (HANWA) said: "Proposals in the final report are supposed to be leading contents but they are too much tied down to reality." Referring to the U.S. policy of halving the number of nuclear weapons by 2012, she averred that the "ICNND report may run behind the reality".

Takahashi, a former director of the Peace Memorial Museum, expressed the sentiments of citizens at large, when he stated: "After I testified my atom bomb experience, I thought that ICNND members' response was positive when some asked to shake hands with me. I hoped that they would mention concrete figures (of reduction in nuclear arsenal) that would have impact on nuclear weapons states. With this outcome, it is meaningless to hold a meeting at a place that suffered from atom bomb attack -- and frankly I am very much disappointed."

Reflecting on the general disappointment, which is however not shared by ICNND co-chairs, Kawaguchi said: "We have agreed on a very ambitious target. I believe we can win the understanding of atomic bomb survivors." She told reporters: "After spending time with the citizens and NGO representatives of Hiroshima, I'm determined that there must be no further suffering from nuclear weapons. Our discussions have reached a comprehensive conclusion with a process for getting to zero in regard to nuclear weapons in the world. We can issue our report in a favourable environment, including U.S. President Barack Obama receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts on behalf of a world without nuclear weapons."

Commenting the contents of the report, Kawaguchi said: "This is an action-oriented report." She pointed out that the contents are "two steps ahead of governments' policies" and that the report would urge ratification and effectuation of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). It would call on all nuclear powers to adopt a "no first use" pledge by 2025, clarifying their intention not to use nuclear weapons unless hit by a nuclear strike.

Evans, the other ICNND co-chair, stated: "There were tough challenges, but we intended to draw up a report that will change the mindset of the world's policy makers. We are proud of the fact that the final 200-page report has been endorsed unanimously. Though it is true that no nuclear weapons have been used since Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this is simply our good fortune."

Asked about the target number for nuclear arms reductions, Evans said: "The number is very low, but I'm unable to speak beyond that. The number has been agreed upon and it will not change." Answering another question why the exact number was not being revealed, Kawaguchi said: "The ICNND was launched by agreement between the governments of Japan and Australia. We intend to first convey our conclusions to our prime ministers."

Asked about the "no first use" pledge, Evans responded: "Declaration of the 'no first use' policy by all nuclear weapon states is an essential step to achieving nuclear abolition. We have set the target year for this at 2025, but we hope it is realized in an earlier year."

Replying to whether 2025 wasn't too late, Evans stated: "We hope to see a world without nuclear weapons as early as possible, even tomorrow. We have met A-bomb survivors and we have a strong desire to realize nuclear abolition. Hope alone, though, will not bring about this goal. I am convinced that people will understand our intentions once they read our report."

Hiroshima's 'Chugoku Shimbun' newspaper wrote: "Considering that they discussed ways toward 'a world free from nuclear weapons' in a location that suffered from nuclear attack, the joint statement lacked an impact."

It added: "Feasibility has been made a priority, but to ensure that the recommendations being put forth in the report are truly achievable, it is vital to make such efforts as reaching consensus on the report within the international community at NPT Review Conference slated for next May. If governments do not view the report seriously and undertake step-by-step actions in line with its recommendations, the 'feasibility' of the report will have been for naught and hope will turn to disappointment."

The 'feasibility' concept is obliquely related to whether nuclear abolition is a utopia that is far-removed from reality. Daisaku Ikeda, president of Soka Gakkai International (SGI), is however convinced that a world free of nuclear weapons is no longer a utopia. There is more than one reason to believe that it is a concrete possibility, Ikeda said in an interview with IDN-InDepthNews Sep. 29. He added: "In recent years, we have seen important, groundbreaking examples of humanitarian ideals surmounting military logic and narrowly defined national interests to bring new disarmament accords into existence." Rather than asking ourselves whether nuclear abolition is possible, we need to ask ourselves what we can do to make this a reality in our times, he said.

**[IDN-InDepthNews | Oct. 23, 2009]**

# 'France, U.S. Pushing Arabs into Nuclear Race'

By Fareed Mahdy in Istanbul

The decision by the oil-rich United Arab Emirates to build nuclear reactors has unleashed frenetic, politically backed competition between giant corporations from France, the U.S., Japan and South Korea to win contracts estimated at more than 40 billion dollars. This may lead to a nuclear race involving other Gulf Arab states.

UAE President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al-Nahyan signed a new law Oct. 4 to regulate production and development of nuclear energy in the federation of seven emirates that he chairs.

UAE authorities were quick to announce that the nuclear programme is for peaceful purposes. "The UAE's nuclear programme is a peaceful project based on its commitment not to enrich uranium, and its ability to achieve the necessary degree of fuel security through a strong infrastructure," UAE special representative to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Hamad Al-Kaabi told reporters.

Kaabi said the UAE has set up a Federal Authority of Nuclear Regulation to promote safety, security and radiological protection, with former IAEA technical adviser William Travers as director-general. He declined to say how many reactors the UAE intends to build. The UAE nuclear plants are scheduled to be operational in 2017. The UAE, a leading oil producer in the world after Saudi Arabia and Russia, is signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Seemingly standard competition among big corporations to win a multi-billion bid, the UAE nuclear programme has unleashed a tough political race, where France apparently has the upper hand.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy co-chaired the inauguration of the first French military base in the UAE in May, in what is considered a long step forward to integrate the oil-rich Gulf region - so far a sort of U.S. 'protectorate' - into French security strategies. Sarkozy is reportedly promoting French companies for the UAE nuclear deal. A consortium

formed by Areva, TOTAL and Suez-Gaz de France is leading the race to construct the first nuclear reactor in an Arab country. Other major competitors are a U.S.-Japanese bid by Hitachi and General Electric; the South Korean Hyundai-Samsung; and Westinghouse from the U.S. A nuclear cooperation agreement between the U.S. and the UAE was signed in January in the last days of the Bush administration.

The U.S. business sector has been seeking the support of neo-conservative political groups to push its case, as a number of Congressmen raised objections that "components" may fall in the hands of Iran. Another Western fear is that nuclear material could fall into the hands of terrorist groups.

Concerns were also raised that the UAE plans may lead to a nuclear race in the Middle East. "Amid the gathering storm over Iran's controversial nuclear ambitions, the race is on among Arab states to build nuclear power plants of their own, opening up immense trade opportunities for the industrialised world as well as the specter of proliferation," the United Press International wrote Sep. 9.

The U.S., Britain, France and Russia "are competing for contracts in the nuclear energy bonanza that is emerging in the Middle East as Arab states seek to generate more power to feed their growing economies and to build desalination plants, a vital element in development plans as water resources shrink," UPI added in its comment.

The French government has reportedly promised assistance to Qatar and Morocco to launch nuclear programmes. Egypt and Jordan have plans to build nuclear plants. Egypt signed a cooperation agreement with Russia last year.

"It is clear that an Iranian nuclear weapon programme would spur a regional arms race, involving the acquisition of nuclear arms by other regional powers like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt and Turkey," Mahtab Alam Rizvi, research assistant at the New Delhi-based Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses wrote last March.

## FRANCE, U.S. PUSHING ARABS



UAE President Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan | Credit; Wikimedia Commons

Saudi Arabia had already announced plans to pursue peaceful nuclear technology as a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), he wrote. "The Saudis, along with their fellow GCC members recently announced a plan to create a body that would provide enriched uranium to the states of the Middle East," Rizvi pointed out.

Rizvi said that if other states in the Middle East that have expressed an interest in nuclear energy follow through with their proposed plans, "the potential for increased instability in the region could have a detrimental effect on the price of oil in the region."

The UAE stresses that its nuclear facilities would be safe. The UAE state-run news agency WAM declared Oct. 6 that the UAE "yet again shows the way ahead to others."

The same day, the Gulf News daily wrote: "This is the key to UAE's trail-blazing nuclear strategy, which is based on the premise that it wants the power from the nuclear stations but does not want to deal with the fuel.

"It has contributed to setting up a new UN agency which will handle all fuel enrichment and processing. This means that the UAE can never fall under suspicion of misusing this nuclear material, and has helped set up a system that many other would-be nuclear states will be able to follow.

The editorial warned, however, that the dangers from proliferation of nuclear weapons are serious. "It is essential to stop the possibility that the material for a weapon of mass destruction could end up in the hands of an irresponsible government, or be passed on to a terrorist group."

The Khaleej Times wrote in an editorial: "What is remarkable is the UAE's resolve to keep its nuclear power programme totally above board and beyond the pale of all controversies and disputes.

"(With) the crucial policy decision by UAE, seeking civilian nuclear option mostly for generating electricity and yet avoiding the critical enrichment process, the UAE has once again shown the way forward to others in the region."

The London-based World Nuclear Association (WNA) that promotes nuclear energy and supports companies in global nuclear industry, said the UAE law aims to "promote the highest standards of nuclear safety, nuclear security and radiological protection."

**[IPS | IDN | Oct. 25, 2009]**

# Toward a Nuke-Free Germany?

By Ramesh Jaura in Berlin

The new conservative-liberal coalition government wants the United States to withdraw all nuclear weapons still deployed in Germany despite the fall of the Berlin Wall, end of the cold war and re-unification twenty years ago.

Confirming the goal, Chancellor Angela Merkel and Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle (then designated) announced Oct 25 and the previous day that they would take up the issue with the U.S. administration. Observers said this might happen when Merkel travels to Washington to address the U.S. Congress on November 3. After Konrad Adenauer who spoke to both houses in May 1957, she will be the second German chancellor to do so.

The coalition agreement that will guide the actions of the government in the next four years states that in the context of the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty next May and "the process of preparing a new strategic concept of NATO, we will work together with American allies for the withdrawal of the remaining nuclear weapons in Germany".

The coalition agreement was signed Oct. 26 by the heads of Christian Democratic Union (CDU), its Bavarian sister Christian Social Union (CSU) and the liberal Free Democratic Party (FDP) -- Merkel, Horst Seehofer and Westerwelle.

Westerwelle left no doubt about his resolve to have nukes out of Germany when he addressed his party rally here Oct. 25. He said the new German government would support the vision of U.S. President Barack Obama for a world free of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, he added: "We will take President Obama at his word and enter talks with our allies so that the last of the nuclear weapons still stationed in Germany, relics of the Cold War, can finally be removed. Germany must be free of nuclear weapons."

Chancellor Merkel, who continues in office in the aftermath of September general election, shares Westerwelle's view but stresses that no unilateral action would be taken

to remove the nuclear warheads. "We do not want any independent action here," Merkel told Oct. 24 reporters in Berlin.

During the cold war that followed on the heels of World War II (1939-1945), the U.S. stationed a large number of nuclear weapons in various European countries. The number of such arsenal still in Germany is estimated at 20 by the German chapter of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) which was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985.

"No official or publicly accessible information is available on where the weapons are stored. But some of the missiles are believed to be stationed at the Buechel airbase in the western German state of Rhineland-Palatinate," agency reports say.

IPPNW Germany -- comprising some 50 peace groups -- welcomed the new government's intention. "This (the coalition agreement) means that the national campaign 'our future -- nuclear weapon-free' has reached an important milestone," said Xanthe Hall, the organisation's nuclear disarmament expert, adding: "We had set ourselves the goal of persuading the government, within three years, to advocate the withdrawal of these remaining nuclear weapons."

She pointed out that "what some people in the media are calling a 'marginal issue' is in fact a very important contribution towards a nuclear weapon-free world". IPPNW believes that a step like this can help negotiations with Iran or North Korea.

"Only if we disarm can we demonstrate to others that nuclear weapons are not necessary for our security and persuade other countries to renounce them," Hall said.

The IPPNW campaigners have been putting pressure on parliamentarians since 2007 to position themselves in regard to disarmament. The campaign to win their support was intensified in run up to the September election.

## TOWARD A NUKE-FREE GERMANY?

The liberal FDP, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen (the Green Party) and Die Linke (the Left Party) have all taken strong positions in recent years on the question of the withdrawal of the nuclear weapons “based in the Eifel region”, and have repeatedly tabled motions in the Parliament.

However, the outgoing CDU/CSU-SPD grand coalition always voted these down. Even though the SPD had pledged to work for withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Germany in its policy programme, it could not vote in favour because of the coalition agreement with the conservative CDU-CSU.

"It was clear from the start that a future coalition agreement would be our greatest obstacle," continued Hall. "That's why I lobbied with candidates already during the election to commit them to saying they would stand up for withdrawal of nuclear weapons during the coalition negotiations."

After the election, the IPPNW campaign council sent letters to all the negotiators. Ten Conservative 'Mayors for Peace' wrote to Chancellor Merkel and asked her to make the issue of disarmament 'Chefsache' (top priority) and end nuclear sharing. The German affiliate of Mayors for Peace supports the campaign "our future – nuclear weapon-free".

The Mayors for Peace NGO is composed of cities around the world that have formally expressed support for the programme announced by Takeshi Araki, the Mayor of Hiroshima, in 1982. The cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki were assaulted by U.S. atomic bombs in August 1945, reducing the two cities within minutes to rubble and killing hundreds of thousands.

Araki proposed on June 24, 1982 at the 2nd UN Special Session on Disarmament a 'Programme to Promote the Solidarity of Cities toward the Total Abolition of Nuclear Weapons'. This proposal offered cities a way to transcend national borders and work together to press for the abolition of all nuclear weapons.

Subsequently, the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki called on mayors around the world to support this programme. The organisation is now supported by 554 cities in 107 countries and regions. Mayors for Peace is recognised by the UN as an official NGO. **[IDN-InDepthNews | Oct. 27, 2009]**

## It's Still "You First"

By Haider Rizvi in New York

Is the ongoing controversy over Iran's nuclear programme helping to advance the United Nations' agenda on nuclear disarmament? To a number of diplomats and experts who have participated in past UN discussions on the spread of nuclear weapons, the answer is, yes – although not necessarily for the expected reasons.

"Iran is challenging the double standards," David Kreiger, executive director of the U.S.-based Nuclear Age Peace Foundation (NAPF), told IPS. "How can you set one standard that challenges Iran's uranium processing and another standard that is completely silent about Israel's nuclear arsenal?"

Israel is believed to have more than 300 nuclear warheads, although its arsenal remains clandestine. The Barack Obama administration in the U.S. is currently involved in multilateral efforts to address the issue of Iranian pursuit of uranium enrichment, but remains silent about calls to set up a nuclear-free zone in the Middle East, Kreiger noted.

He believes this issue is not going to be resolved so long as the nuclear powers, particularly those from the Western hemisphere, remain non-committal toward nuclear disarmament.

Iran's leadership has repeatedly denied that it is pursuing a weapons programme, and argues that pursuing a peaceful nuclear programme for energy production is its inalienable right and that in doing so it is not violating the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The NPT has been endorsed by all the nations that hold UN membership, except for India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. The 1968 treaty allows its signatories to produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, and requires nuclear-armed nations to take action towards dismantling their arsenals.

For its part, Iran has vigorously countered the Western powers' accusation that it is trying to use its nuclear programme for military purposes, and demands that that the ↻



## IT'S STILL "YOU FIRST"

United States and other nuclear-armed nations take steps to dismantle their own nuclear arsenals, which they are obligated to do in accordance with the NPT.

At the UN General Assembly's First Committee - which is tasked to discuss the issue of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament - a vast majority of delegates have raised questions about the lack of will on the part of the major powers to move ahead with plans to abolish nuclear weapons.

"We do not accept any justification for the acquisition or the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons," stated Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, chairman of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) from Brazil, at a General Assembly meeting early this month.

Established in 1998, the NAC consists of seven countries that have abandoned their nuclear programmes in order to comply with the NPT, namely Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden, South Africa and Brazil.

"Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing processes," said Soares. "Both therefore require continuous and irreversible progress."

To NAC, it is axiomatic that the only absolute guarantee against the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons is the complete and verifiable elimination of those weapons.

"For as long as a number of states deem that the possession of nuclear weapons is essential for their security, there may be others who will aspire to acquire them, and the risk will remain that they may fall into the hands of non-state actors," Soares said.

NAC does not accept "any justification for the acquisition or the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by any country", said Soares, who strongly believes that the possession of nuclear weapons "cannot contribute to international peace and security".

The UN is due to hold a major conference next summer to assess the NPT. In a recent statement, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he wants nuclear-armed nations to take concrete steps towards disarmament.

Ban has asked the 15-member UN Security Council to convene a summit on nuclear disarmament, and has called for all the non-NPT members to freeze their weapon capabilities. "Disarmament must enhance security," he stated recently.

His call for the summit comes after Pres. Obama, who recently won the Nobel Peace Prize in part for his support of nuclear disarmament, indicated his willingness to take concrete steps towards eliminating the U.S. arsenal by signing on to the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and backing fissile material cut-off.

Republican opposition in the United States, however, remains as intransigent as ever. On Thursday (Oct. 29), John Bolton, the hawkish former UN ambassador and a close confidant of former president George W. Bush, launched his book "ConUNdrum," in which he suggested that the UN "should abolish the Conference on Disarmament".

Though cautious about expressing optimism, some independent policy analysts in the United States think that the prospects for reaching the targets of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are increasingly promising.

"I definitely think that the administration is going to take concrete steps," the NAPF's Kreiger told IPS. One such step, according to him, would be the U.S. explicitly rejecting the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons.

"That would tell the world that he [Obama] is de-emphasising the role of nuclear weapons in the U.S. security strategy," he said.

As reported this month in *The Atlantic*, Obama has said he would take a hands-on role in the U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, due out next year, in which Pentagon officials have been calling for new warhead designs.

Although Obama espouses a world without nuclear weapons, he has also said that the U.S. must retain an arsenal for deterrent purposes as long as other nations are nuclear-armed. [IPS | Oct. 31, 2009]

# U.S.-Japan Accord: Seeking a Nuke Free World

By Ernest Corea in Washington

Japan, the only country to be the target of atom bombs, and the U.S., the only country to drop them, firmly committed themselves to working towards a nuclear weapons free world, when President Barack Obama visited Japan during his first presidential tour of Asia.

The combination of these two nations in this endeavour gives their commitment special relevance and strength. It also offers the lesson to others that reaching out to the future is more creative than wallowing in the past.

Nuclear disarmament was high up on the agenda during Obama's state visit, and a 'Joint Statement toward a world without nuclear weapons' embodied the views and hopes of both governments. Both governments also welcomed current international interest in nuclear disarmament and reaffirmed their "determination to realize such a world".

For Obama, the joint statement confirmed his belief that nuclear disarmament can serve as the foundation of global peace and security. His approach to nuclear disarmament was endorsed by the Nobel Committee whose official statement announcing the award of the Peace Prize to Obama said that the committee "attached special importance to Obama's vision of and work for a world without nuclear weapons".

For Japan, the emphasis on nuclear disarmament was a reminder of its unique experience, and reaffirmed its insistence that never again should such a human tragedy be visited on any country.

In this context, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and Obama welcomed the support received for recent nuclear disarmament initiatives at the UN in which Japan and the U.S. played leading roles. They pledged to take practical steps that would create conditions in which the challenge of nuclear disarmament might be met. Some of the steps described in the joint statement are summarized below.

**Nuclear Disarmament:** The U.S. will continue to seek early conclusion of a START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) follow-on treaty through negotiations with the Russian Federation.

The U.S. and Japan urge all states that hold nuclear weapons to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their national security strategy. They also called on states that hold nuclear weapons to respect the principles of transparency, verifiability and irreversibility in the process of nuclear disarmament.

**Nuclear Non-Proliferation:** Both countries reaffirmed the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). They will cooperate on matters connected with the 2010 NPT Review Conference so that the treaty may be strengthened, and its central role in international non-proliferation efforts renewed.

They expect the review conference to recommend realistic and achievable goals to strengthen each of the NPT's three pillars -- nuclear non-proliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and nuclear disarmament.

**Test Ban Treaty:** Japan welcomed the Obama administration's intention to push for ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Japan and the U.S. will work together to achieve the early entry into force of the CTBT.

They are also determined to pursue the immediate commencement of negotiations on, and early conclusion of, a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

**North Korea:** In the view of both countries, North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons remains a major threat to peace and stability in Northeast Asia and the entire international community. Japan and the U.S. remain committed to the irreversible and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

They stress that the Six Party Talks remain the most effective framework to achieve these goals and they urge North Korea to return to the Six Party Talks without preconditions.

**Iran:** Iran's nuclear activities, in particular the recent disclosure of Iran's construction of a new facility near Qom, have reinforced the international community's concern regarding the nature of its nuclear program. Japan and the U.S. will continue to seek a comprehensive, long-term resolution of these issues, based on UN Security Council resolutions. ➡

Nuclear Security: Both countries will cooperate in efforts to ensure the success of the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit that will be hosted by the U.S., and will as well promote regional efforts to strengthen nuclear security. Japan will host a nuclear security conference for Asian countries in Tokyo in January 2010. The U.S. welcomes this initiative, as well as Japan's decision to host the next preparatory meeting in December for the Nuclear Security Summit.

Nuclear Terrorism: Recognizing the continuing threat of nuclear terrorism, the two governments are committed to ensuring that civil nuclear materials and facilities receive the highest levels of physical protection. They also pledge their support for efforts to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years.

IAEA: The two countries expressed support for the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and welcomed the election of the new director general, Ambassador Yukiya Amano, who is due to assume office shortly. They will continue to back all measures that will give the agency the resources, authority, and verification capabilities necessary to carry out its essential mandate.

Peaceful uses of nuclear power: Japan and the U.S. intend to work together and with other countries to explore ways to enhance a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation, including assurances of fuel supply, so that countries can access peaceful nuclear power without increasing the risks of proliferation.

## **U.S.-JAPAN ACCORD**

Some years ago, an Asian foreign minister said that if the international community was honest with itself, it would build a monument to the atom bomb outside UN headquarters in New York. This would be a reminder of the reality, he argued, that it is the existence of nuclear power in the world and its capability to wreak global destruction, that is the best guarantee of international peace.

Headlines are born of sentiments such as these, of course. In a violence prone world, however, where wars are fought on flimsy pretexts and countries are invaded without a semblance of rational justification, to depend on the potential of nuclear destruction as a guarantee of peace is, at the very least, a gamble.

The inevitability of nuclear power has been taken for granted over the years but, gradually, the case for nuclear disarmament has received a strong hearing. The agitation of civil society has contributed toward this trend; so has advocacy within international institutions. The recommitment of the U.S. and Japan to this objective is one more step forward. Their joint leadership could be a lasting contribution to peace and security down the years. Obama and Hatoyama deserve to be commended for this new beginning.  
**[IDN-InDepthNews | Nov. 19, 2009]**

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# Inter-religious Forum Calls for Nuclear Abolition

By Neena Bhandari

For the global religious community, the use of nuclear arms is an overwhelmingly important ethical issue for the human family. Thus, nothing less than the immediate abolition of such weapons is needed from the highest levels, said speakers at the Parliament of the World's Religions currently underway in this Australian city.

The Parliament, considered the world's biggest inter-religious gathering, brings together people of various faiths to tackle issues relating to peace, diversity and sustainability. It opened on Dec. 3 and runs until Dec. 9 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Its theme, 'Make a World of Difference: Hearing each other, Healing the earth', reflects the urgent need for religious and civil society groups to act on crucial issues threatening the world's survival, nuclear arms being one of them.

Considered the most significant human-made destructive force on the planet, nuclear devices pose a spiritual as well as existential threat to humanity, participants said.

"The time for us to act decisively is now," said Dr Sue Wareham, immediate past president of the Medical Association for Prevention of War in Australia, and Australian Board Member of the international campaign to abolish Nuclear weapons (ICAN).

Noting that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will have its five-yearly review in May 2010, Wareham said, "Progress towards nuclear disarmament will be critical at this meeting if we are to prevent further spread of the weapons, which should no longer be seen as status symbols or legitimate military weapons, but rather they should be seen for what they are —illegal and inhumane instruments of terror."

ICAN's goal is the adoption of a Nuclear Weapons Convention, a treaty to prohibit the

development, testing, production, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons.

"Such a treaty is feasible and necessary," Wareham said during the session on 'The necessity of nuclear disarmament and steps toward its achievement'. "It is about reclaiming the right of every person to live free from fear of nuclear holocaust. This is a human rights, environmental, economic, health, political and security issue and above all it is an ethical issue."

In June, the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stressed that nuclear disarmament is "the most urgent political problem" that the world faces. In September, the first ever UN Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament resolved to "create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Non-Proliferation Treaty".

Many civil society organisations around the world have galvanised to ensure that the 2010 NPT review sees real progress.

"We need a massive global uprising against nuclear weapons as was done to abolish slavery, to save humanity from annihilation," said Ibrahim Ramey, director of the Human and Civil Rights Division at Muslim American Society (MAS) Freedom Foundation in Washington, D.C.

MAS Freedom has adopted the support of global nuclear abolition as one of the 12 points of its national (United States) legislative agenda for 2008-2012. "In light of the revelation of the Quran and the need to affirm the most positive of Muslim social values, we must demand the abolition of nuclear weapons, and the conversion of massive nuclear (and conventional) military spending into resources for social uplift and the sustaining of human life," Ramey said.

In 2008, the United States spent some 52.4 billion U.S. dollars for the maintenance of its nuclear arsenal while more than 37 million Americans live in poverty and nearly 50 million live without health insurance.

"Relatively new nuclear weapons states like India and Pakistan are both immersed in great levels of persistent poverty and insecurity while they devote scarce resources to building dangerous and unsustainable nuclear arsenals that can never be used without the certainty of inevitable mutual annihilation," Ramey pointed out. ☹

Ramey called on the global community to get involved in networks pushing for nuclear abolition and put pressure on national governments to support the NPT. He said Article 6 of the treaty specifically compels the nuclear weapons signatory states to enter into negotiation for the eventual abolition of nuclear weapons.

He likewise urged nations to encourage bilateral declarations of "no first use" by states parties to global conflicts, especially in the ongoing hostilities and disagreements between Israel and Iran, and India and Pakistan.

In the U.S., Ramey said, "We are calling for an executive order by President Barack Obama to de-alert U.S. nuclear forces by separating nuclear warheads from strategic missile delivery systems, thus reducing the danger of an accidental nuclear launch against potential adversaries."

He said people of all faiths and non-faith must support organisations like Soka Gakkai International (SGI) in their efforts to intensify the campaign against nuclear arms. In 2007 SGI launched its "People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition" initiative to rouse public opinion and help create a global grassroots network of people dedicated to abolishing nuclear weapons.

The Tokyo-based SGI, a Buddhist association with over 12 million members in 192 countries and one of the world's longstanding advocates of nuclear disarmament, has intensified its global campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons. The campaign, which began in 1957, has picked up steam following President Obama's public declaration that the "United States (the only country to launch a military strike with nuclear weapons) will take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons." "While we need states and governments to take responsible action to reduce the nuclear threat, civil society clearly has an important role to play," said Hirotsugu Terasaki, SGI's executive director of the office of peace affairs in Tokyo.

"In an ultimate sense, nuclear arms are product of and made possible by a particular form of human egotism—the self-centredness that is ready to sacrifice others in order to protect our own interests or society. Unless we uncover and disarm this aspect of the human heart, a genuine and enduring solution to this threat of nuclear arms will not be possible," Terasaki added.

At the heart of the SGI's nuclear abolition efforts is the desire to appeal to people's better nature and to restore confidence in the power of dialogue.

## INTER-RELIGIOUS FORUM

Terasaki argued that "the logic of states and their competing interests would lead to the conclusion that the possession of such weapons enhances a state's security position." Yet civil society "refuted this logic, stressing the injustice of weapons that harm non-combatants more than soldiers and continue to do so long after a conflict has officially ended."

Various religious communities, like SGI, have engaged in an extensive range of grassroots activities, petition drives, and developed educational tools, including volumes of nuclear survivors' testimonies, DVDs and publications showing what individuals can do to mobilise public opinion for global nuclear disarmament.

Speaking on 'Nuclear Weapons Abolition: Response and Advocacy by Religious Communities', Kimiaki Kawai, program director for Peace Affairs at SGI, expressed belief that "the initiatives for nuclear abolition should not be driven by passive, negative emotions such as fear or guilt." Instead, they should become "a positive endeavour to build a culture of peace motivated by human conscience and high moral concerns."

[IPS | Dec. 8, 2009]

**"While we need states and governments to take responsible action to reduce the nuclear threat, civil society clearly has an important role to play,"**

# 'Nuclear Energy Not a Solution to Climate Change'

Neena Bhandari interviews Dr Sue Wareham, proponent of a nuclear-free world

As the threat of nuclear weapons looms large over the very existence of life on earth, Dr Sue Wareham, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons' (ICAN) Australian board member, is calling for a speedy abolition of these weapons and the rejection of nuclear power as a solution to climate change.

Speaking at the sessions on nuclear abolition and disarmament at the 2009 Parliament of the World's Religions here, Wareham said the power of religion should be harnessed to bring peace in the world through disarmament, abolition of nuclear weapons, eradication of poverty and action on climate change.

The six-day Parliament, which ends on Dec 9, is a gathering of religious and spiritual communities from different parts of the world to discuss issues relating to peace, diversity and sustainability.

A medical practitioner and immediate past president of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) in Australia, Dr Wareham believes that her work with MAPW is fundamental to her commitment to the protection of human life and the improvement of human well-being. In an interview with IPS, she expounds on her passionate pursuit of a nuclear-free society.

**IPS: Why is there a sense of urgency to abolish nuclear weapons now?**

SUE WAREHAM: One of the reasons this issue is becoming increasingly urgent is because the five yearly review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will be coming up in May 2010. It is absolutely clear that unless there are moves there towards disarmament and clear signals from the nuclear weapon states that they are willing to take steps

towards getting rid of their weapons, we won't be able to prevent the spread of these weapons further. So nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-Proliferation need to go hand in hand.

**IPS: ICAN's goal is a Nuclear Weapons Convention, a treaty to prohibit the development, testing, production, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. Is it a feasible and achievable solution?**

SW: It is definitely feasible, and it is necessary. We are calling on people across the world to put pressure on their respective governments to promote a Nuclear Weapons Convention at the NPT review conference next year. We see the convention as the most promising route for the world to take towards nuclear weapons abolition.

It sets the same rules for all countries and that gets around one of the major difficulties at the moment, which is that there is one set of rules for countries that already have nuclear weapons and another set of rules for those that don't.

**IPS: Is nuclear power, being carbon-free, the panacea for climate change problems and should it be a substitute for coal-fuelled power stations?**

SW: We don't agree nuclear power is a sensible way forward in response to climate change. Nuclear power cannot address the issue of climate change. There are physical limitations to the number of nuclear power stations that could be built in the next decade or so.

Even if there is further development of nuclear power, it will be far too slow because it takes 10 to 15 years to get a nuclear power plant at a point of producing electricity. We need action faster than that.

Particularly important also is the links with weapons. We know there are definite links between the civilian and military fuel cycles, and that is a particular problem that will remain as long as nuclear power is there.

There is also the problem of nuclear waste to which no country has a solution yet. We regard it as unacceptable that this generation should leave our waste to future generations. The technological and practical reality is that we don't have any way of separating nuclear waste from the environment. ☹





Dr Sue Wareham  
President

Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) in Australia

Our message is that the world really needs to put serious and significant funding into further promotion, development and implementation of renewable energies—solar, wind, geothermal and biofuels, which have been underused and under-resourced.

**IPS: Has the United Nations succeeded in curbing the spread of nuclear weapons or is it held to ransom by permanent members of the Security Council?**

SW: The United Nations General Assembly every year has a good number of resolutions in favour of nuclear disarmament and is really trying to push this forward. I think we need to distinguish the UN as a whole from some of its member states in the Security Council.

All five members of the UN Security Council have nuclear weapons, which is an extraordinary thought that we are entrusting the security of the world to the hands of the five nations that have the worst weapons of terror.

## NUCLEAR ENERGY NOT A SOLUTION

**IPS: When it comes to possession of these weapons, aren't there double standards for the haves and have-nots?**

SW: There are about 25,000 nuclear weapons in the world today in the hands of nine countries, and these nine nations really hold the world to ransom. What we notice is that a number of the countries that keep nuclear weapons are also most vocal about calling for other nations not to acquire them.

In addition to these nine countries, there are a group of countries, including Australia, which claim to be protected by a 'Nuclear Umbrella' (or middle powers lending bases, ports and infrastructure for the U.S. nuclear war-fighting apparatus, lending credence to the idea that nuclear weapons bring security), and we regard that as a problem also. For example, the Australian Government calls on other nations such as Iran not to acquire nuclear weapons and yet Australia claims that we still need to be sheltered under the 'Nuclear Umbrella'.

**IPS: Why has humanity been so slow and ineffective in meeting the challenge posed by nuclear arms?**

SW: Nations that have nuclear weapons have been allowed to justify their weapons by the theory of "deterrence," which is claimed to prevent wars between nuclear-armed countries. But it is a failed theory, because, as we are seeing, if some nations believe they have a right to these weapons, then other nations will claim the same right. It is a recipe for every nation to have the world's most destructive weapons. What's needed is for all nations to abide by the same rule, which is that all weapons of mass destruction – especially nuclear weapons, which are the most terrifying of all – must be abolished.

IPS: What can religious and spiritual communities do to meet the challenge of abolishing these weapons of mass annihilation?

SW: We see the issue of nuclear weapons as one of the great ethical issues of our time. It is an issue that religions of the world really need to come to grips with because nuclear weapons are the most destructive and threatening weapons to have ever been created. Therefore, we regard people, who are interested and passionate about ethical issues, have a responsibility of calling for abolition of nuclear weapons. **[IPS | Dec. 9, 2009]**

# Disarmament: DPRK and U.S. Recommit to 2005 Joint Statement

By Eli Clifton in Washington

United States Envoy to North Korea Stephen Bosworth announced Thursday (Dec. 10) that his three-day visit to Pyongyang has produced no commitment from the North Koreans to return to multilateral talks aimed at ending Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme. However, both sides recommitted to a 2005 joint statement in which the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) committed to dismantle its nuclear programme in exchange for economic aid and other incentives.

"As President Obama has made clear, the United States is prepared to work with our allies and partners in the region to offer North Korea a different future. The path for North Korea to realise this future is to choose the door of dialogue in the six-party-talks and to take irreversible steps to achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," said Bosworth at a press conference in Seoul, South Korea.

Pyongyang quit the Six-Party Talks - which included the U.S., China, South Korea, Russia, Japan and North Korea - and called for unilateral talks with the U.S. after the United Nations Security Council condemned nuclear tests conducted by North Korea.

Since April there has been little movement, aside from former president Bill Clinton's successful trip to North Korea in August to secure the release of two U.S. journalists held by North Korea since March when they were accused of crossing the border from China into North Korea.

Bosworth was careful to characterise his talks as "exploratory" and established a "common understanding" of the need for negotiations. But there would have to be further consultation with other members of the Six-Party Talks. Pyongyang has come across as eager for direct contact with the Obama administration and Chinese officials have established that such contact was a condition for reclusive North Korean

leader Kim Jong-Il to return to the Six-Party Talks. While Bosworth did not meet with Kim Jong-Il he did conduct meetings with senior officials including Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju and senior nuclear envoy Kim Kye Gwan. Bosworth said that he and his North Korean counterparts reached a "common understanding" that Pyongyang must reaffirm the 2005 joint statement which committed reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il to give up his nuclear programme in exchange for economic aid.

"There's nothing I see out of Bosworth's statements that addresses the DPRK's position that the movement back to the Six-Party Talks depends on the outcome of U.S.-DPRK talks," Alan Romberg, a Korea specialist and former senior State Department official at the Henry L. Stimson Centre told IPS. "How that gets defined over time will be very important."

"More interesting in a way, is the fact that they came to some common understandings on the need to, and importance of, implementing the 2005 joint statement [the DPRK] had previously said was a dead document and any commitments made in that were not valid and they did it in a way that at the time was fairly definitive," Romberg explained. "They have now, at the very minimum, apparently stepped back from that adamant position. But we don't know how much flexibility really is in their position at this point."

While falling short of bringing Pyongyang back to the Six-Party talks the apparent reaffirmation of the 2005 joint statement does suggest that Pyongyang may be willing to examine possibilities of exchanging the dismantling of its nuclear programme in return for various incentives.

Still, Bosworth emphasised that only once the Six-Party Talks reconvened and "gained significant traction" in dismantling North Korea's nuclear programme would Washington be ready to discuss incentives mentioned in the 2005 joint statement including: economic aid, a peace treaty formally ending the Korean War, normalisation of relations with Washington, and security guarantees.

"One of the preconditions for the breaking of the stalemate is the for the North Koreans to see that there's no way to drive wedges between us and South Korea, us and China, us and Japan, and no give in our position. The private position is the public position," Richard C. Bush III, director of the Centre for Northeast Asian Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, told IPS. "This was an important first step in reinforcing where our line was."  
[IPS | Dec. 11, 2009]

# Nuclear Power 'Yes' – Nuclear Proliferation 'No'

By Clive Banerjee in Vienna

Nuclear power is a dirty word for those who champion the cause of clean energy. It needs some guts, therefore, to take up the cudgels on behalf of the atom as an important source of non-fossil energy.



This is precisely what Yukiya Amano, the veteran Japanese diplomat, did on Dec. 9, seven days after taking charge of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Amano told member delegations of 151 countries that nuclear energy was enjoying "growing acceptance as a stable and clean source of energy that can help to mitigate the impact of global warming".

These remarks came within two days of the start of the historical climate change conference in Denmark's capital Copenhagen where developing countries and emerging economies were locking horns with the industrialised countries.

"Many member states have made it clear that they attach great importance to launching new nuclear power programmes, or expanding existing programmes," Amano said. "We have already significantly re-focussed our activities to help meet the needs of newcomers to nuclear power. . . . I plan to build on our achievements and make the assistance we provide in capacity-building and other areas as practical and recipient-friendly as possible."

He then went on to say: "My hope is that, as a result of the Agency's efforts, member states will start to see tangible progress within four years on the path towards introducing nuclear power."

Though these remarks sounded out-of-date, IAEA's new director general was in fact providing an overview of the areas that will receive his special attention in the mid-term, keeping in view the statutes of the Vienna-based agency that was set up as the world's "Atoms for Peace" organization in 1957 within the United Nations family.

It is tasked with assisting in harnessing atom for the welfare of human kind -- instead of total destruction caused by the nuclear bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States.

IAEA works for nuclear non-proliferation and enhancing nuclear safety and security.

It assists member states "in meeting their energy needs, responding to concerns about climate change, helping to ensure food security and clean water and improving health care through the application of nuclear techniques".

IAEA's technical cooperation programme, which seeks "to make the benefits of nuclear science and technology more widely available is important to all member states", said Amano. "My intention is to continue to focus on technical cooperation so that we can more effectively meet the needs of member states, as identified by them," he told member delegations.

In this regard, the priority is capacity-building to help countries establish their own expertise in nuclear science and technology.

Amano plans to pay special attention in his first year to cancer control, and he will make his first official trip to Nigeria to learn first-hand about its efforts to build an effective cancer control programme, among other issues. In January, he will use his participation in the World Economic Forum in Davos to appeal for focussed global attention on the growing cancer epidemic. Next September, cancer control will be the topic of IAEA's Scientific Forum.

In the area of non-proliferation, Amano sees his role as being to ensure that safeguards agreements are concluded and fully implemented, to provide member states with factual and objective information and analysis, and to act in accordance with relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and IAEA's board of governors.

**[IDN-InDepthNews | Dec. 12, 2009]**

# ICNND Spreads Tainted Joy

By Taro Ichikawa in Tokyo

Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and his Australian counterpart Kevin Rudd had reason to rejoice when they received and launched the report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), calling for a cut of more than 90 percent in the world's nuclear arsenals by 2025.

Sponsored by both governments, the Commission -- co-chaired by Gareth Evans and Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Australian and Japanese foreign ministers -- had finished its much awaited report five months ahead of the landmark conference on review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) next May in New York.

But the two prime ministers' joy was adulterated by a barrage of criticism of the report by civil society organisations from Japan, Australia and other parts of the world. The report was written by a 15-member panel headed by Evans and Kawaguchi, and represents consensus achieved in the Commission.

The significance of the 332-page document titled 'Eliminating Nuclear Threats - A Practical Agenda for Global Policymakers' lies in the fact that twenty years after the end of the Cold War there are at least 23,000 nuclear warheads with a combined blast capacity equivalent to 150,000 Hiroshima bombs.

U.S. and Russia together have over 22,000, and France, Britain, China, India, Pakistan and Israel around 1,000 between them.

Nearly half of all warheads are still operationally deployed, and the U.S. and Russia each have over 2,000 weapons on dangerously high alert, ready to be launched immediately -- within a decision window of just 4-8 minutes for each president -- in the event of perceived attack. The command and control systems of the Cold War years were repeatedly strained by mistakes and false alarms.

With this in view, Hatoyama said the report -- released Dec 15 in Tokyo -- was "a guidebook that will lead the world to peace is now complete, and this is really wonderful". Rudd called it "an important framework for discussions and debate on non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in what will be a critical year in 2010."

The 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, reviewed every five years, has been severely strained, the report says. The last review conference in 2005 was an "unrelieved disaster" with backsliding on disarmament commitments by key players such as the U.S. then president George W Bush, it adds. At the same time, nuclear states India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea have not ratified the non-proliferation treaty.

While welcoming the report, in a joint statement, Japanese, Australian and other NGOs say it "falls well short of our expectations" because "the pace of the action plan for nuclear disarmament laid out in the report is far too slow". Rather than adding to the global momentum for nuclear abolition, there is a danger that it could in fact act as a brake, they warn.

The signatories of statement include Tadatashi Akiba, Mayor of Hiroshima, who presides over the 'Mayors for Peace', and his counterpart from Nagasaki, Tomihisa Taue. The two cities are the only in the world to have suffered from nuclear holocaust.

Other signatories include Nobel laureate International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) Australia Chair, Associate Professor Tilman Ruff. The biggest reason for their disappointment is that the report fails to draw a practical path to nuclear abolition as an urgent and achievable goal. The report aims for a "minimization point" by 2025, when there should be fewer than 2,000 nuclear weapons in the world. Beyond that, no process or timetable for moving to zero is presented.

"There is a risk that such an agenda might have the effect not of advancing the goal shared by the Commission of a world free of nuclear weapons, but of being used to perpetuate a world where fewer nuclear weapons are maintained indefinitely."

The statement points out that the Hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) have in their testimony and in personal witness to the ICNND last October in Hiroshima, appealed that such a tragedy must never be repeated anywhere on earth. They proclaim that the use of nuclear weapons is a crime against humanity and that the human race cannot co-exist with nuclear weapons. ➡

Scientists warn of the global environmental destruction and consequences if even a tiny fraction of existing nuclear weapons are ever used again. Recent international developments demonstrate that as long as some countries possess nuclear weapons, or endorse their value, other countries will seek to acquire them.

For this reason, civil society has been demanding a comprehensive approach towards the abolition of nuclear weapons. Mayors throughout the world have proposed that nuclear weapons be eliminated by 2020. The Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are calling for the consecration of a world without nuclear weapons in that year.

"Anyone who seriously listens to these voices can only conclude that the action plan laid out in this report lacks an awareness of the urgency, or a sense of the crisis we face," says the joint statement. The ICNND report suggests that a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) will be necessary in order to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. The civil society organisations give the Commission credit for this recognition. However, the report relegates the drafting of such a NWC to sometime around 2025.

"Such a timetable is far too slow and complacent. The fact is that a model NWC drafted by NGOs over a decade ago has already been submitted to the United Nations by the governments of Malaysia and Costa Rica and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has repeatedly called for UN Member States to seriously consider such a convention.

This year a multiparty committee of the Australian Parliament unanimously recommended that the Australian Government support a NWC. What is required is for governments of every country, in cooperation with civil society, to begin working for a NWC now," the joint statement says.

The signatories warmly welcome that the report calls for the de-legitimization of nuclear weapons and recommends that the role of nuclear weapons in security policies be limited. ICNND recommends that, while aiming for a "no first use" nuclear posture, all nuclear-armed states should declare that the sole purpose of their nuclear weapons is the deterrence of nuclear attack.

The civil society organisations find it "significant" that a commission led by Australia and Japan, both of which rely on extended nuclear deterrence (the so-called nuclear umbrella), made such a recommendation. In particular, it was reported that during the Commission's deliberations, the Japanese participants resisted such a limitation on the role of nuclear weapons.

## ICNND SPREADS TAINTED JOY



ICNND Photo: [Left to Right] Commission co-chair Gareth Evans, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd of Australia, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan, Commission co-chair Ms Yoriko Kawaguchi at the launch of the report in Tokyo. Credit: ICNND

They will therefore be "carefully watching the actions taken by the Japanese government on this issue". In their view it is "totally unacceptable for government officials in non-nuclear weapon parties to the NPT to resist disarmament by the nuclear weapons states and threaten or imply that they might acquire nuclear weapons if the nuclear umbrella is dismantled in favour of non-nuclear deterrence and defence.

In a separate six-page response, ICAN Australia gets tougher. Although ICNND is intended to be

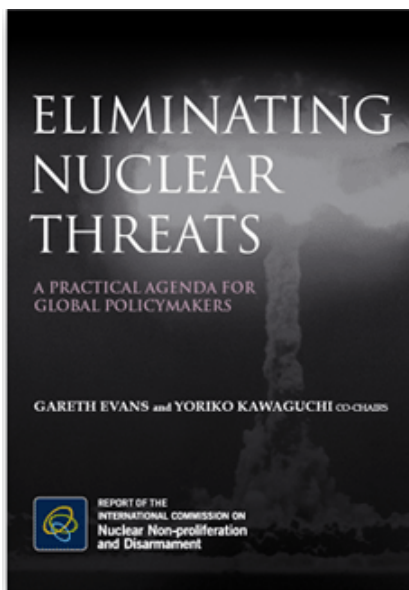
independent, a well-connected enterprise sponsored by the Australian and Japanese governments, both U.S. allies, should really be more explicit on their role, it says. Says ICAN: In recent months it has been confirmed that the foreign affairs establishment in Japan for decades had a secret agreement to turn a blind eye to US nuclear weapons entering Japan, contrary to Japan's stated policy.

More recently Japanese officials have been actively opposing President Obama's nuclear disarmament agenda. It has become public that the Commission has also struggled with similarly recalcitrant Japanese influences opposing the U.S. moving to a policy of nuclear no first use. "This is deeply regrettable and troubling from the country which has suffered nuclear attacks on two of its cities."

"In Australia this year's Defence White Paper runs completely counter to our government's stated commitment to nuclear disarmament by affirming Australia's reliance on U.S. nuclear deterrence out to 2030 and beyond. And Australia's exports of uranium continue to nuclear armed states, ☹



## ICNND SPREADS TAINTED JOY



with inadequate safeguards on its enrichment and no restrictions on reprocessing of spent reactor fuel derived from it," notes ICAN.

It adds: Extended deterrence does not need to be nuclear. A new Japanese government, with Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada supporting nuclear no first use, and Prime Minister Hatoyama speaking in support of the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, provides an excellent opportunity for a joint Australian-Japanese initiative actively supporting President Obama's disarmament agenda and a U.S. no first use commitment.

ICAN Australia says: "Both (Australia and Japan) countries should walk the talk by making it clear that they want to transform their alliance relationship with the U.S. to one that excludes

use of nuclear weapons. This would be the most powerful action our two governments could take towards supporting President Obama and a world free of nuclear weapons. It would be influential globally, including for NATO."

The ICNND report refers to the threat of nuclear terrorism and the risks associated with peaceful uses of nuclear energy. However, the civil society organisations find the specific measures proposed for controlling materials and technology that can be diverted to nuclear weapons, including uranium and plutonium, "inadequate".

The report was released just as COP 15 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was being held in Copenhagen. "At a time when the world's energy policies are at a turning point due to global warming, much stronger measures are called for to deal with the risk of nuclear proliferation associated with nuclear energy."

ICAN Australia Chair, Associate Professor Tilman Ruff said: "The Commission's brazen promotion of nuclear power sits uneasily with its recognition of the need to control the

inherently dual-use processes of uranium enrichment and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium. It is contradictory for the Commission to promote nuclear power, exacerbating proliferation dangers, without adequately addressing the current failures of the non-proliferation regime and demonstrating how they can be fixed."

ICAN Australia's position is that achieving and sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons would be much easier and quicker in a world in which nuclear power was being phased out. However while nuclear power is used, the industry needs a major overhaul so that uranium enrichment only occurs under strict international supervision, and reprocessing of spent reactor fuel to extract plutonium ceases.

ICAN believes that reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies - preparing and working for a world without nuclear weapons - is the responsibility of all countries, not only the nuclear-armed states. Allies of nuclear armed states bear particular responsibilities.

Pre-empting expected criticism, the two ICNND co-chairs however say that when they were assigned the task of leading this Commission in July 2008, they saw its task as being primarily to energize a high-level international debate -- "to try to reverse the sleepwalk into which international nuclear policy had largely fallen since the burst of arms control energy that accompanied and immediately followed the end of the Cold War".

In particular they saw their task "to try to ensure that there would be no repetition" at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference scheduled for May 2010 of the failure of its predecessor in 2005, and the World Summit of that year, to agree on anything at all.

There had been the beginnings of a new debate with the publication of the Shultz-Perry-Kissinger-Nunn "gang of four" article in January 2007, arguing from a hard-headed realist perspective that nuclear weapons had outlived any usefulness they might have had, but in mid-2008 global policymakers were still not focusing.

By the beginning of 2009, however, things had changed. Newly elected U.S. President Barack Obama launched a series of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and security initiatives -- to which President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia, in particular, was immediately responsive -- and nuclear issues were squarely back on the global agenda. **[IDN-InDepthNews | Dec. 19, 2009]**



# From Simple Anti-War Agenda to Expansive Peace Initiatives

**Mutsuko Murakami interviews Ikuro Anzai, honorary director of the Kyoto Museum for World Peace**

Of approximately 170 peace museums that exist around the world, a third are found in Japan.

The Kyoto Museum for World Peace at Ritsumeikan University, located in Kyoto, is the only one in Japan housed in a higher educational institution. It captures the history of the country's aggression as well as its tragic wartime experiences.

The private university in Japan's ancient capital was once an active advocate of the country's belligerent behaviour during the Second World War. In 1992 the university founded the Museum as part of its commitment to peace building.

The Kyoto Museum has attracted more than 900,000 visitors. Today, it is widely known for its active peace education campaigns and collaborative programmes at home and across borders.

Considered a major force behind the Kyoto Museum is Dr Ikuro Anzai, who is also its first director. A trained physicist, he taught at a medical school before he was invited to teach international affairs at Ritsumeikan in 1986. Dr Anzai has since gained recognition as a leading scholar on peace studies. He now serves as director emeritus of the Nanjing Research Institute for International Peace at Nanjing University, China,



Prof Ikuro Anzai: "Peace is not just the absence of war."

Credit:Ritsumeikan University

which aims to gather historical documents on the atrocities committed by Japan during its occupation of China's ancient capital in December 1937.

In 2008, the Museum hosted the 6th International Conference of Museums for Peace, which drew over 5,000 participants from more than 50 countries. Dr Anzai was a key mover in making the event possible. The first such conference was convened in 1992 at Bradford, England, giving rise to the International Network of Museums for Peace (INMP), where he sits on the executive board.

The INMP plans to have the next international conference in 2010 in Barcelona, to be followed by another one two years later in The Hague.

In an interview with IPS, Prof Anzai discusses the important role of peace museums in the global peace efforts as well as the prospects and challenges involved.

**Q: Why does Japan have so many peace museums?**

A: Our country's aggressive pursuit of war left so many scars, not to mention memorial items to exhibit. Because of the war and partly because of the (Japanese) people's tragic experiences of nuclear attacks [referring to the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki], people developed a strong urge to pursue peace.

In 1978 the Japanese collected 30 million signatures for the first Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly. They have been a major force calling on local (prefectural) governments and cities to declare a nuclear-free status or build peace museums in cities and towns. Civil society in Japan has indeed demonstrated its capacity for peace building.

**Q: You say peace museums can do more than document and depict historical facts on wars and their consequent human sufferings. What role do peace museums play in this regard?**

A: To promote "peace literacy" and contribute more effectively to peace building in the world, museums can organise lectures, film showings, research efforts, tours, peace conferences and touring exhibits, among others. We can build a network of such museums and support each other for the common cause, too. Some peace museums in Japan are already sharing exhibit items among themselves and jointly organizing new programmes. We have invited officials and curators of other Asian museums →

## FROM SIMPLE ANTI-WAR AGENDA ...

outside Japan to exchange experiences and ideas. Together we can do a lot more than the "cobweb"-style exhibits, where we only wait for people to come.

### **Q: What other factors steered peace museums in this new direction?**

A: We have seen the evolution of the concept of peace since Dr. Johan Galtung – the Norwegian scholar and founder of peace studies – redefined it during the 1970s.

Peace is not just the absence of war, he says, but also of any form of violence, deprivation of human rights, environmental exploitation or cultural violence.

We have shifted our emphasis at our museum from simple anti-war agenda to expansive peace studies. Some other peace museums have also adjusted to adopt this new definition of peace.

### **Q: What did the 2008 International Conference of Museums for Peace accomplish? What is the next step?**

A: In addition to the success of the conference itself, it led us to build a framework for its organising body, the INMP. We have made it a legal institution, created its constitution, appointed officials, built its membership system and set up the administrative office in The Hague.

Prof Peter van den Dungen of Peace Studies at the University of Bradford (in Britain) acts as its general coordinator. Such institutionalising process provides us with a solid base for further development in the future. Through the INMP, we can strengthen our unity, expand our peace studies in collaboration (with similar institutions) and help new museums to be launched.

### **Q: You have established strong ties with the Nanjing Massacre Museum, which shows the gross injustice committed by the Japanese military in China in 1937. Has there been any progress in the reconciliatory process between China and Japan through efforts like yours?**

A: Although the Nanjing Massacre Museum (the largest museum of its kind in the world) depicts massacre and human sufferings, it now also emphasizes "peace creation." It is

significant to note that they appointed me -- a Japanese national -- as director emeritus at its Research Institute for international peace. We will continue our endeavors toward true reconciliation. Someday I hope we can exchange exhibits with the Nanjing Massacre Museum and Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

### **Q: What are the next challenges for you?**

A: I would like to see our museum expand into a new peace museum complex, comprising three new museums. One will be a Science and Technology Museum for Peace at our university's Lake Biwa Campus; the second, an International Understanding Museum for Peace at Ritsumeikan Asia-Pacific University in Oita Prefecture down south; and thirdly, a Digital Resource Museum for Peace Education at the university-affiliated primary, junior and senior high schools.

Internationally, I expect the INMP to develop further all the way to the 2012 conference in The Hague. It will be an epoch-making event paving the way for our people to play active roles in the decade that will follow. [IPS | Jan. 1, 2010]

In 1978 the Japanese collected 30 million signatures for the first Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly. They have been a major force calling on local (prefectural) governments and cities to declare a nuclear-free status or build peace museums in cities and towns. Civil society in Japan has indeed demonstrated its capacity for peace building.

# Iran Uses Fear of Covert Nuclear Sites to Deter Attack

By Gareth Porter\* in Washington

The New York Times reported January 5 that Iran had "quietly hidden an increasingly large part of its atomic complex" in a vast network of tunnels and bunkers buried in mountainsides.

The story continued a narrative begun last September, when a second Iranian uranium enrichment facility near Qom was reported to have been discovered by U.S. and Western intelligence. The premise of that narrative is that Iran wanted secret nuclear facilities in order to be able to make a nuclear weapon without being detected by the international community.

But all the evidence indicates that the real story is exactly the opposite: far from wanting to hide the existence of nuclear facilities from the outside world, Iran has wanted Western intelligence to conclude that it was putting some of its key nuclear facilities deep underground for more than three years.

The reason for that surprising conclusion is simple: Iran's primary problem in regard to its nuclear programme has been how to deter a U.S. or Israeli attack on its nuclear sites. To do that, Iranian officials believed they needed to convince U.S. and Israeli military planners that they wouldn't be able to destroy some of Iran's nuclear sites and couldn't identify others.

The key to unraveling the confusion surrounding the Qom facility and the system of tunnel complexes is the fact that Iran knew the site at Qom was being closely watched by U.S. and other intelligence agencies both through satellite photographs and spy networks on the ground well before construction of the facility began.

The National Council of Resistance in Iran (NCRI), the political arm of the Mujahideen E Khalq anti-regime terrorist organisation, held a press conference on Dec. 20, 2005, in which it charged that four underground tunnel complexes were connected with Iran's nuclear programme, including one near Qom. NCRI had created very strong international pressure on Iran's nuclear programme by revealing the existence of the Natanz

enrichment facility in an August 2002 press conference. A number of its charges had been referred to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for investigation.

It is now clear that there was nothing in the tunnel complex at Qom related to the nuclear programme when the NCRI made that charge.

Given the close ties between the MEK and both the U.S. and Israel, however, Iran's decision makers had to be well aware that foreign intelligence agencies would focus their surveillance in Iran on the tunnel complexes that the MEK had identified.

U.S. and European officials have confirmed that systematic surveillance of the site by satellite photography began in 2006. What happened next is a particularly important clue to Iran's strategy. According to multiple sources, an anti-aircraft battery was moved to the base of the mountain into which the tunnel complex had been dug. That was a clear indication that Iranian officials not only knew the site was under surveillance but wanted to draw attention to it.

That move prompted serious debate within the intelligence community. French security consultant Roland Jacquard, who had contacts in the intelligence community, recalled to Time magazine last October that some analysts suggested that it could be a "decoy", aimed at fixing intelligence attention on that site, while the real nuclear facilities were being built elsewhere.

If Iran had believed the site was not under surveillance, there would have been no reason to move an anti-aircraft battery to it. That anti-aircraft battery was evidently intended to ensure that foreign intelligence would be watching as construction of a new facility continued at Qom. ➡

**\*Gareth Porter is an investigative historian and journalist specialising in U.S. national security policy. The paperback edition of his latest book, "Perils of Dominance: Imbalance of Power and the Road to War in Vietnam", was published in 2006.**

## IRAN USES FEAR OF COVERT . . .

Satellite imagery that has been obtained by the Institute for Science and International Security in Washington, D.C. shows that construction of the facility began sometime between mid-2006 and mid-2007, according to satellite imagery interpretation specialist Paul Brannan of the ISIS.

Of course intelligence analysts could not be certain of the site's precise purpose until a later stage of construction. A senior U.S. intelligence official revealed in the Sep. 25 briefing that the analysts were not confident that it was indeed an enrichment facility until sometime in spring 2009.

Meanwhile, the Iranians were providing foreign intelligence agencies with clear evidence it would use a "passive defence strategy" to protect its nuclear facilities.

In a statement on Iranian television Sept. 24, 2007, the Chairman of the Passive Defence Organisation, Gholam Reza Jalali, said the strategy would "conceal and protect the country's important and sensitive facilities, [which] would minimise their vulnerability..."

Jalali revealed to Mehr news agency Aug. 24, 2007 that a nuclear installation monitored by the IAEA was part of the plan. As the New York Times reported January 5, tunnels have been built into mountains near the Isfahan uranium conversion complex.

News media have consistently reported that Iran informed the IAEA about the Qom facility in a letter Sep. 21 only because the site had been discovered by Western intelligence.

But a set of Questions and Answers issued by the Barack Obama administration the same day as the press briefing admitted, "We do not know" in answer to the question, "Why did the Iranians decide to reveal this facility at this time?"

In fact, Iran's Sep. 21 letter to the IAEA, an excerpt of which was published in the Nov. 16 IAEA report, appears to have been part of the strategy of confusing U.S. and Israeli war planners. It stated that the construction of a second enrichment facility had been "based on [its] sovereign right of safeguarding...sensitive nuclear facilities through various means such as utilization of passive defense systems..."

As Time magazine's John Barry noted in an Oct. 2 story, the letter was read by intelligence analysts as suggesting that among the more than a dozen tunnel sites being closely monitored were more undisclosed nuclear sites.

A few days later, the Iranian daily Kayhan, which is very close to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, said the announcement of the site had helped to foil plans for a military strike by the West, because "the multiplicity of facilities is a very effective defensive action".

That statement hinted that Iran was able to complicate the task of U.S. and Israeli military planners by introducing uncertainty about where additional nuclear facilities might be hidden.

The New York Times article on Iran's tunnel complex indicates that Iran's strategy has succeeded in influencing debates in Israel and the United States over the feasibility of a devastating blow to the Iranian nuclear programme.

The Times called the tunneling system "a cloak of invisibility" that is "complicating the West's military and geopolitical calculus".

It said some analysts consider Iran's "passive defense" strategy "a crucial factor" in the Obama administration's insistence on a non-military solution.

One indication of that the Iranian strategy has had an impact on Israeli calculations is that Maj. Gen. Aharon Ze'evi Farkash, the head of intelligence for the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) from 2002 to 2006, supported an attack on Iran by the U.S. Air Force – a standard Israeli position – at a meeting at the pro-Israel Washington Institute for Near East Policy last October.

But Farkash warned that Western intelligence still may not know about all of Iran's nuclear sites. In other statements, Farkash has opposed an Israeli strike.

**[IPS | Jan. 10, 2010]**

# Unified Approach Needed

By Jayantha Dhanapala in Kandy\*

The only viable normative approach regarding nuclear weapons is their total and universal elimination under strict verification. This cannot be achieved by incremental steps but only by the negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention as advocated by the UN Secretary-General.

Today, there are some grounds to hope for a reconciliation of the broken marriage between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Both US President Obama and Russian President Medvedev have repeatedly indicated their support for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. We may be heading for a new age of deproliferation, a reversal both of the spread of these weapons and of their perpetuation and further improvement.

The concept of nuclear-weapon 'proliferation' has two dimensions: horizontal (geographical spread) and vertical (improvements of existing arsenals). The nuclear-weapon states (NWS), supported by states in NATO and others under the 'nuclear umbrella', have long stressed the importance of preventing the former while promoting the latter.

Here's how it works. The NWS express alarm over the prospect, real or imagined, of new nuclear-weapon states. This leads them to engage in desperate efforts (such as the illegal invasion of Iraq) to prevent this from happening, hence the need for ever-increasing controls against horizontal proliferation.

Yet this contrived foreign threat has a dual-use: it also serves the NWS as grounds for rationalizing the improvement ('modernization') of their nuclear arsenals, and the indefinite postponement of disarmament. The selective narrative of the NWS has even further obfuscated matters with the conspiracy of silence over the undeclared nuclear-weapon capability of Israel, which some of them have assisted. Moreover, an arbitrary distinction has been drawn between 'good' and 'bad' proliferators. The 1995 Resolution on the Middle East -without which the indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) would not have been achieved- has been ignored.

Thus India, a longstanding holdout of the NPT but a 'good' proliferator, has been rewarded with supplies of technology and material under its nuclear co-operation deal with the US. Likewise the stationing of US nuclear weapons in five European countries despite the objections of the public in some of them is justified as 'nuclear sharing'.

A new dimension is the possible acquisition and use of nuclear weapons by terrorist groups, which, while being frighteningly real, is another form of proliferation that the NWS have seized upon to distract attention from their own nuclear weapons - which, of course, have no conceivable military value in combating terrorism. The fundamental issue is that nuclear weapons are inherently dangerous in anybody's hands.



This upstairs/downstairs division of responsibilities between nuclear have's and have-not's is also pernicious in masking the reality that disarmament and non-proliferation are two faces of the same coin. They have to be mutually-reinforcing parallel processes.

The emergence in the 20th century of nuclear weapons as the most destructive weapon of mass destruction and terror marked a watershed. This weapon proved to be vastly more destructive of human life with long-lasting ecological and genetic effects. Thus the elimination or control of nuclear weapons became the priority of the UN and the international community.

Bilateral treaties between the two largest NWS (US and Russia, which hold an estimated 95 percent of these weapons) and multilateral treaties banning nuclear tests (the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty or CTBT) and proliferation (NPT) have sought to regulate their vertical and horizontal proliferation. So have the nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties forged by non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS). ↻

**\* Jayantha Dhanapala was UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs from 1998-2003 and is currently President of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs. These are his personal views.**

➡ It is estimated by SIPRI (the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute) that today there are more than 23,300 nuclear warheads in the world and that the US, Russia, UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, and Israel have 8,392 deployed warheads ready to be launched within minutes. The normative structure with regard to all weapons has two aspects. One is to seek universal bans on inhumane weapons or particular categories of weapons for humanitarian and collective security reasons. The other is to seek arms control in terms of levels of arsenals or prevention of new possessors. Disarmament requires verifiable destruction of existing weapons, cessation of production, sale, storage, transfer, or acquisition.

Thus the outlawing (as distinct from limitation or reduction) of biological and chemical weapons, anti-personnel land mines, cluster munitions, laser weapons, and other categories has been achieved globally even though the multilateral treaties negotiated for these purposes may not be universal and their verification is not always reliable.

The one treaty which attempts a combination of disarmament and arms control is the NPT, which is the world's most widely subscribed to disarmament treaty. It openly accepts two categories of state parties -- the NWS and the NNWS.

NWS are obliged, as treaty parties, to negotiate the reduction and elimination of their weapons. NNWS are totally forbidden to acquire such weapons and the International Atomic Energy Agency is empowered to enter into arrangements with them when peaceful uses of nuclear energy are involved.

As far as arms control is concerned, NWS are permitted to retain their weapons with the restraints that apply through other bilateral and multilateral treaties. But instead of fulfilling their obligations under the NPT, the NWS are trying to impose more restrictions on the NNWS in preparation for the May 2010 NPT Review Conference by seeking to limit the Article X right to withdrawal and to impose new conditionalities for the Article IV right to their peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The discovery of Iraq's clandestine nuclear weapon programme in the early 1990s; the withdrawal of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the NPT and its subsequent nuclear weapon tests; the acknowledgment and rectification of Libya's non-compliance; the persisting questions about a reported Syrian nuclear reactor destroyed by Israel; and the continuing tensions over Iran's nuclear programme have certainly weakened the NPT as a non-proliferation instrument. At this juncture, only a reunification of the disarmament and the non-proliferation approach can save the treaty.

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## Try with Nukes As With Mines

**Chryso D'Angelo interviews Nobel Peace Prize  
Laureate Jody Williams**

Since the expiration of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in December, U.S. and Russian negotiators have been busy hammering out a new pact that will reduce the number of nuclear warheads deployed in both countries by about one-quarter, according to Washington.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in Moscow Mar. 18 to discuss the progress of the START agreement, originally signed by the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) Jul. 31 1991, during the Cold War.

"It especially is important for the United States and Russia, who bear the responsibility, to continue the way forward on non-proliferation and to work as partners in the global effort to secure fissile materials and counter the threat of nuclear terrorism," Clinton said.

The meeting came ahead of upcoming talks on nuclear disarmament: the Nuclear Security Summit, which will be held on Apr. 12-13 in Washington, and The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) conference, slated for May 3-28 in New York.

"We're hearing rhetoric from governments, but words without action are not very useful," Jody Williams, whose group helped ban anti-personnel land mines in 1997 tells IPS. Williams won the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for her work on the Mine Ban Treaty of 1997. She is founder of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL).

"Governments are not going to move forward unless citizens come together to make it happen," Williams says. "There are too many vested interests in the world to keep nukes."

Excerpt from the interview: ➡

## TRY WITH NUKES AS WITH MINES

**Q: The Mine Ban Treaty was quite a success. It managed to stop the production of landmines in 38 nations and destroy almost 42 million anti- personnel mines worldwide. How can it be used as a model for nuclear disarmament?**

A: We succeeded because we brought together a range of non-government organisations with the common goal of disarming landmines. These were ordinary people that pressured governments to bring about change.

We need that kind of model in order to bring about nuclear disarmament. I'm a little critical of civil society work on banning weapons, however. It doesn't make my friends happy to hear me say it. It's just my opinion as a grassroots activist on disarmament. I don't see enough NGOs coming together with a single focus to stop nuclear proliferation.

**Q: Why do you think that is?**

A: One of the great pluses we had in the landmine movement is that nobody had been doing it. We were coming into virgin territory. There were organizations taking mines out of the ground, giving victims prosthetics, but there were none banning the mine. In nuclear weapons, organizations have continued their work over decades. That creates turf. There is too much concern over who is going to get the credit.

**Q: Do you support the START treaty?**

A: I firmly support START. I hope they sign an agreement before the Nuclear Security Summit in April and the NPT meeting in May.

**Q: How has Europe's position on the renegotiation of the START talks helped or hampered its advancement?**

A: Part of Europe's position is terrific. There are five countries - Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands, and Norway - that want the U.S. to get their arsenals out of Europe. The Czech Republic and Poland are not as excited about losing this nuclear umbrella because they fear the history of the Soviet Union.

I don't see how the U.S. or Russia, who hold most of the world's nuclear weapons, can go

to the NPT conference in May and call upon states who have already given up the weapons to increase their commitment to not having them. If I were one of those states, I would be flipping them the bird, frankly.

**Q: What type of roles, if any, will non-signatories of the NPT, like India and Pakistan, play in the conference in May?**

A: If I'm India, I'm just going to be sitting there watching because the U.S. has demonstrated that the world is hypocrisy by violating the NPT. The U.S. made it legitimate to sell nuclear technology to India.



How can you do these things with credibility and ask countries to not do the same thing? It's the model of the bully saying, 'I'm the biggest guy on the block. I have the most and the biggest nukes, so you have to let me do what I want to do.'

**Q: Do you feel there are double standards on Iran?**

A: Yes, there is a double standard, which doesn't mean that Iran doesn't have bad intentions. However, if I'm Iran, and I'm in that volatile region and I see Bush threaten Iraq over weapons of mass destruction and then invade to find that there are no weapons and then I see his dealings with North Korea, which has weapons, and he does nothing, what would I conclude? That I should have weapons to defend myself.

**Q: How realistic are fears of an Islamic nuclear bomb?**

A: Fears of new nuclear weapons anywhere in the world are realistic. There are about 34 countries that have petitioned to get the technology to build nuclear power. Many are in the Middle Eastern region that we're worried about. With nuclear technology, you can build a bomb. [COPYRIGHT IPS | March 29, 2010] Picture: Wikimedia Commons



# Time for a Comprehensive N-Weapons Convention

By Dimity Hawkins \* in Melbourne

History has never provided a better time to act on nuclear disarmament. The desire to free the world of the 23,300 nuclear weapons currently in global stockpiles has come vividly into the spotlight as both global leaders and civil society groups lead the charge toward abolition.

Last April in a keynote address in Prague, US President Obama declared his intention to "seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons". It is a goal shared by civil society groups worldwide.

This April the US and Russia are expected to sign a new bilateral treaty to replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, which would reduce their nuclear arsenals by 25%. As the US and Russia currently possesses 96 percent of the world's nuclear armaments, all such moves towards freeing the world of these weapons are both welcome and long overdue.

There is growing recognition that verifiable and complete nuclear disarmament cannot be achieved by incremental steps alone but only through a comprehensive framework. To achieve this, civil society groups and an increasing number of governments are joining in a call for a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC).

In 1997, non-government experts from around the world took the bold move of releasing a model NWC. Such a convention had been in discussion for many years in multilateral forums and had gained momentum since the re-launching of the Model NWC in 2007. It is a document that has been accepted twice by the United Nations, in 1997 and 2007.

**\*Dimity Hawkins is the Campaign Director for the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), based in the ICAN head office in Australia (<http://icanw.org>).**

While governments talk, civil society has again come up with positive solutions, setting in motion an achievable trajectory and providing a blueprint to start work on a verifiable, comprehensive NWC.

It's not a new concept but rather an idea whose time has come.

A NWC would strengthen the handful of disarmament negotiations already in place by prohibiting the production of fissile material and the development, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. Parties would be required to declare all nuclear weapons, material, facilities, and delivery vehicles.

They would then be required to abolish their nuclear arsenals in set phases, first taking the weapons off high alert, then withdrawing them from deployment, removing the warheads from their delivery vehicles, disabling the warheads, and placing all fissile material under international control.

While some governments question how much political capital they would gain by pushing nuclear disarmament in highly demanding domestic settings, civil society continues to drive the agenda towards a world free of these ultimate weapons of mass destruction.

Each year about two-thirds of nations vote in favour of a resolution in the UN General Assembly calling for the early commencement of negotiations on a NWC. This is shown in polls commissioned by Global Zero in 2008 in 21 countries indicating that 76 percent of people globally wanted their governments to reach a binding agreement to abolish nuclear weapons within a specified time frame.

The UN Secretary-General has proposed a convention as the first point in his five-point plan for a nuclear-weapon-free world. Civil society and an increasing number of governments see the sense in developing a comprehensive convention or treaty. It is here that we find the leadership required to draw reluctant (especially nuclear-armed) countries towards the plan for zero.

The barriers to the successful negotiation of a NWC are political, not technical. Language of intent from all governments is needed and must be followed with action. Preparations towards a NWC must be made now if the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons is to be realized. ➔



➔ Global civil society groups such as the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, Mayors for Peace, Abolition 2000, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Soka Gakkai International, and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons are working together on this agenda.

These groups, representing medical practitioners, local government, women of peace, people of faith, and people of vision, meet regularly with governments and ambassadors to drive the agenda for a NWC.

On June 5 this year groups all over the world will be taking united actions under the banner "NWC - Now We Can" - demanding global governments move forward the agenda of zero nuclear weapons, driven by concerns that substantial progress may not be made at the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference at the UN in May.

There is growing impatience with the 40 year-old NPT as the threats of proliferation continue. Insufficient substantive progress on nuclear disarmament has been achieved in the past four decades. A NWC would enhance the existing commitments to disarmament contained in Article VI of the NPT by providing a road map to elimination.

Right now there are at least 23,300 reasons to pursue a NWC in the world. And every one of them carries with it an imperative to action. Civil society knows this. Now is the moment for governments

to meet the expectations of the majority of the world's people and prepare for a NWC to finally abolish nuclear weapons for all time and for all people.

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**Each year about two-thirds of nations vote in favour of a resolution in the UN General Assembly calling for the early commencement of negotiations on a NWC.**

## Japan Pushes for Progress in U.S. Nuclear Review

**By Jamshed Baruah\* in Berlin**

Japanese parliamentarians and activists pin high hopes on the hotly debated and much anticipated U.S. Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) to which the Barack Obama administration is reported to be giving finishing touches.

Mandated by the U.S. Congress, this review will set the tone and direction for U.S. nuclear weapons policy for the next five to ten years. The nuclear policy re-assessment under way is the first in nearly two decades after the Cold War ended. The Bill Clinton and George W. Bush administrations completed their NPRs in 1994 and 2001, respectively.

Japan is the only country to have suffered nuclear bombings, on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, it is therefore anxiously looking forward to a new orientation of the role and mission of the U.S. nuclear forces - particularly against the backdrop of intermittent rattles of atomic tremors from North Korea.

In an e-mail interview from Tokyo, former Japanese vice-minister for foreign affairs Masayoshi Hamada tells IPS: "The possibility of Japan getting involved in nuclear disarmament in a big way is just ahead of us."

Hamada, who represents the opposition New Komei Party in the House of Councillors is one of the 204 members of the two chambers of the Japanese parliament (Diet), who have endorsed a letter to President Obama, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Defence Secretary Robert Gates and top members of Congress. The letter backs resumption of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (START) between the U.S. and Russia to cut the number of nuclear weapons.

**\* The writer is a correspondent of IDN-InDepthNews specializing in nuclear disarmament issues and Japan.**



A group of Japanese parliamentarians handing over a letter for President Obama to U.S. Ambassador Roos in Tokyo

The letter follows one by Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada to Clinton in December 2009. In the letter, Okada distanced himself from the previous Japanese administration's support for a strong U.S. nuclear posture, and expressed concerns that some Japanese officials may have lobbied the U.S. not to reduce its nuclear arsenal - a position which "would clearly be at variance with my views, which are in favour of nuclear disarmament."

Okada's letter also supported the idea that the role of nuclear weapons be restricted to deterrence of the use of nuclear weapons, and that the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon state members of the NPT be banned.

The parliamentarians' letter points ahead to a series of upcoming events including a nuclear security summit to be held in Washington in April and a Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty review conference the following month in New York.

Many are asking whether the Diet members' letter will have any impact on the Obama administration's NPR and the decision of the U.S. Congress, particularly as only 204 out of 700 legislators signed the letter.

"The number of 204 does not mean that the rest are opposed to the letter or were reluctant to sign it," says Akira Kawasaki, executive committee member of Peace Boat, a

global group based in Japan, and advisor to the Australian and Japanese co-chairs of the International Commission on Nuclear Non- Proliferation and Disarmament. "If the initiators of the move had been pro- active, all the Diet members would have signed the letter.

"Members of the Communist Party did not sign the letter because they found it to be too modest, and instead favoured further steps for disarmament," Kawasaki said in an e-mail interview from Tokyo. Hans M. Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project at the U.S.- based Federation of American Scientists tells IPS in an e-mail interview from Washington:

"The (Diet members') letter together with the Japanese government's statements serve an important role of conveying loud and clear that the most important U.S. ally in the Pacific does not oppose the Obama administration's nuclear disarmament vision but supports not only reductions in nuclear weapons but also a reduction in the mission that those weapons have."

The NPR will reaffirm a U.S. commitment to extended nuclear deterrence in the Pacific (and elsewhere) but also have Japanese support to reduce both the numbers and mission, Kristensen said in the e-mail interview.

Asked what he thought of the view among some sections of the Japanese political elite that no first use and sole purpose declarations on the part of the U.S. would expose Japan to the Chinese and eventually North Korean nuclear threat, Gregory Kulacki, senior analyst and China project manager at the U.S.-based Union of Concerned Scientists said that they had conducted an extensive investigation.

"While there are concerns among some nuclear security experts in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence (in Tokyo) about significant changes to U.S. declaratory policy, there is virtually no chance those concerns would damage the alliance or lead to a change in elite Japanese attitudes about their strong support for the NPT and nuclear disarmament," Kulacki said in an e-mail interview from Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"The Government of Japan has strongly endorsed the ICNND recommendations for an immediate U.S. declaration that the sole purpose of U.S. nuclear weapons is to deter and, as a last resort, respond to the use of nuclear weapons by another country." ' [IPS | IDN | March 17, 2010]

# Editor's Note

This compilation is purported to make accessible in print all articles that were written and disseminated through the network of IPS and that of its partners between April 2009 and March 2010 -- as part of the SGI-IPS pilot project. Some additional articles closely related to the central theme of the project -- nuclear abolition -- are also included.

We hope this compilation will enable interested readers -- and perhaps researchers too -- to inform themselves of some important developments leading up to the landmark NPT Review Conference in May 2010.

Written by professional journalists drawn from diverse social and political backgrounds, these articles record ongoing developments related to nuclear abolition and provide an insight -- from the viewpoint of professional journalists into what goes into making things happen before they happen.

These articles are reproduced in the chronological order in which these appeared on specialized websites [http://www.ipsnews.net/new\\_focus/nuclear/index.asp](http://www.ipsnews.net/new_focus/nuclear/index.asp) and <http://www.nuclearabolition.net> as well as in several editions of *Global Perspectives* -- <http://www.global-perspectives.info> -- the monthly journal for international cooperation in print and online.

While all articles continue to be available on the Internet, this compilation in print or as .pdf offers a short cut sans World Wide Web, accessible anywhere and any time that suits the reader's convenience.

We hope you will enjoy reading these articles -- and will welcome your feedback.

Thanks due to the support of project director, Mr. Katsuhiro Asagiri, and IPS editors and journalists as well as of those outside the network of IPS, we are in a position to offer you these articles in the form of this compilation. Profound thanks also to SGI for the close and fruitful cooperation.

Ramesh Jaura | Global Coordinator and Editor-in-Charge



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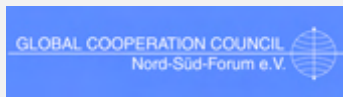


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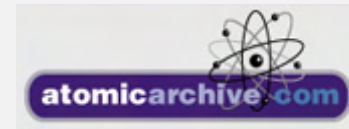
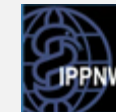
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## • Nuclear Abolition News

### Who We Are

In order to strengthen public awareness of the urgent need for nuclear abolition, the Tokyo-based [Soka Gakkai International \(SGI\)](#), a Buddhist association, and the [Inter Press Service](#) global news agency have initiated a media project which aims to help to shed light on the issue of nuclear abolition from the perspectives of civil society through the global media network of IPS and beyond.

As part of this project, [IDN InDepthNews](#), the news analysis service of the [Globalom Media](#) group, in partnership with the [Global Cooperation Council](#), has launched this special website.

### Why Now

A single nuclear weapon can cause appalling devastation, death and lifelong suffering, as evidenced by the testimonies of survivors of the atomic bombs dropped by the U.S. over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945. Yet, thousands of nuclear weapons remain on hair-trigger alert.

Realising that the world is at increased risk of nuclear terrorism and proliferation, while efforts toward nuclear disarmament have been deadlocked, U.S. President Barack Obama pleaded for a nuclear free world in a

## Nuclear Abolition News . Analysis . Features

### U.N. Nuke Meet Ends with Good Intentions and Empty Promises

Nuclear Abolition News | IPS  
By Thalif Deen

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By Ernest Corea  
IDN-InDepth NewsAnalysis

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### 「核なき世界」への疾走という課題

【ワシントンDC・IDN=アーネスト・コリア】

核不拡散条約（NPT）の2010年運用検討会議の最後の数日、メディアでは暗い見出しが躍り、多くの観者は交渉は決裂に終わるだろうと考えていた。しかし、最終宣言が全会一致で可決された。意見対立の多い問題について一致を見たことは、核軍縮への道における重要な一里塚となった。

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