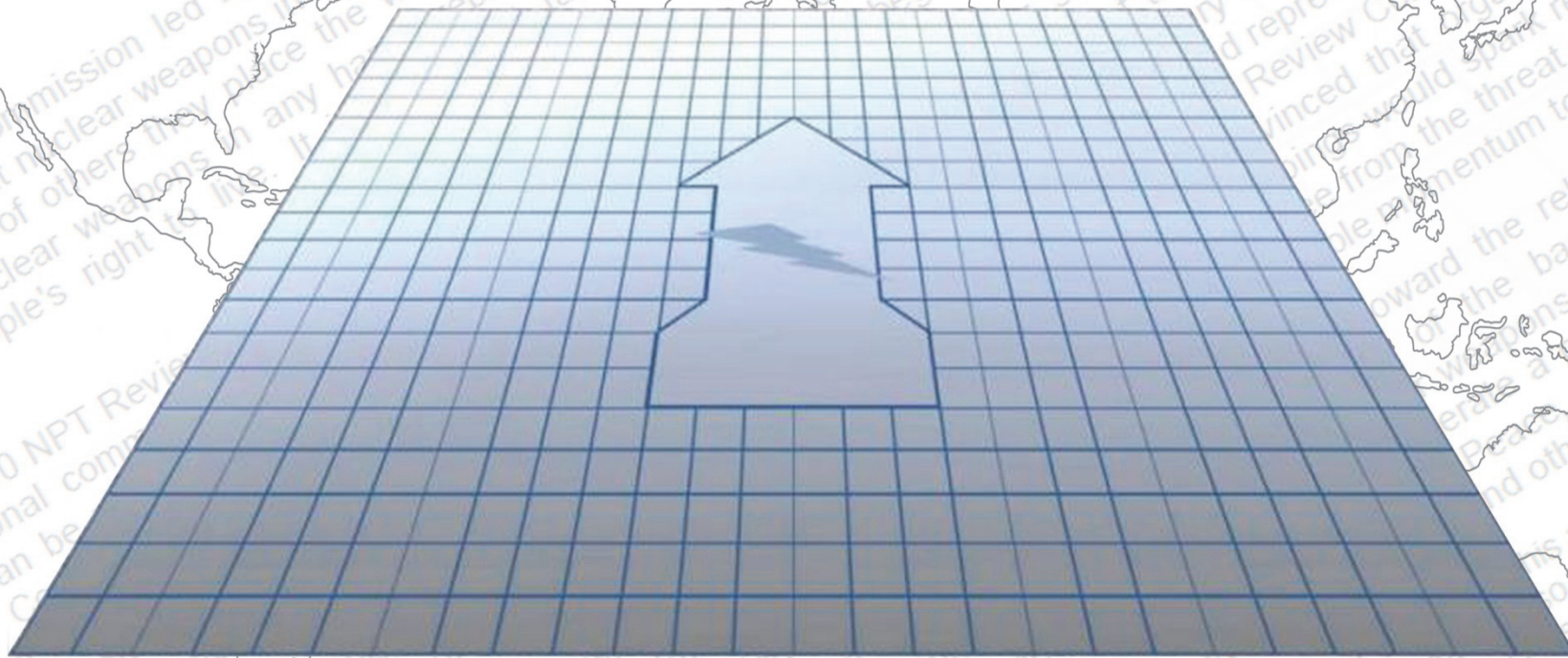


# TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

2013 Report of the Joint Media Project



Conducted by Inter Press Service (IPS)  
and Soka Gakkai International (SGI)  
in cooperation with Media Network of  
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This report is part of a project aimed to strengthen public awareness of the urgent need for abolition of nuclear weapons. It was initiated by the Tokyo-based Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Buddhist association, and the Inter Press Service (IPS) global news agency in April 2009, with a view to help shed light on the menace of atomic weapons from the perspectives of civil society through the global media network of IPS and its partners such as Global Perspectives. The journalistic articles, reproduced here, were written and published between April 2012 and March 2013 and are freely accessible online at: [www.ipsnews.net/news/projects/nuclear-weapons](http://www.ipsnews.net/news/projects/nuclear-weapons) and [www.nuclearabolition.net](http://www.nuclearabolition.net).

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## MESSAGE FROM

**TILMAN RUFF | CO-CHAIR ICAN INTERNATIONAL STEERING GROUP**

The fundamental realities of nuclear weapons are as profound as they are clear. Nuclear weapons are by far the most destructive, indiscriminate, persistently toxic weapons ever invented. They cannot be used in any way compliant with international law. While they exist, there is a danger they will be used. The only way to eliminate this danger is to eradicate nuclear weapons.

While some nations possess them, others will inevitably seek to acquire them, or at least the means to produce them in short order. These means are now readily accessible around the world. The lifetimes of uranium and plutonium isotopes which can fuel bombs are measured over tens, hundreds of thousands, or millions of years. Human intent and politics can change on a dime. Hence stocks of fissile materials, the capacity to create more, and nuclear weapons themselves are the problems, irrespective of the intentions of their custodians at any point in time. Whatever their ostensible justification or purpose, a nuclear weapon is a nuclear weapon - once detonated the searing catastrophe they would unleash is dictated by the laws of physics alone.

Even a single nuclear weapon exploded over a city would cause a humanitarian catastrophe to which no effective response is possible. Use of more than several tens of nuclear weapons, even less than 1% of the current global arsenal, would cause global cooling, darkening and drying, depleting agriculture over successive years, and resulting in



starvation worldwide on a scale never witnessed before. Nuclear weapons thus pose the most acute risk we face of abrupt climate disruption.

The last few decades have seen major progress on the elimination of other indiscriminate and inhumane weapons - chemical and biological weapons, landmines and cluster munitions. It represents a profound failure of the global community that the worst weapons of all remain the only ones not subject to specific legal prohibition. Sixty-eight years since the nuclear bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we still have no binding, verifiable, legal framework to eradicate nuclear weapons. And we have no international controls on uranium enrichment or the reprocessing of spent nuclear reactor fuel, both of which can provide the feedstock for nuclear weapons.

All the nuclear-armed states are investing massively in the modernisation of their nuclear arsenals, and justifying their planned retention into the indefinite future. It is a forlorn hope to expect that leadership towards a world freed from nuclear weapons will come from the states which continue to

wield these weapons and hold global humanity hostage.

In 2013, there are clear signs that an evidence-based approach is developing momentum, based on the actual effects and unacceptable harm which any use of nuclear weapons would cause, and the impossibility of any meaningful response.

One landmark was expression at the 2010 Review Conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), of “deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons”.

Another was the November 2011 passage of a resolution “Working towards the elimination of nuclear weapons” by the highest governing body of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent movement, appealing to all states “to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used” and “to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement”.

A third development has been a succession of statements on the centrality of humanitarian concerns about nuclear weapons and the urgency of making progress towards their elimination. At the 2012 NPT PrepCom such a statement attracted 16 signatories; at the UN General Assembly in October 2012 a similar one attracted 35 signatories, and another at the 2013 NPT PrepCom was supported by 80 states.

A Norwegian intergovernmental conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in March 2013 was, extraordinarily, the first ever such meeting. It attracted 127 - fully two thirds - of the world's governments; despite an arrogant and defensive boycott by the US, Russia, China, UK and France. In his concluding summary, Norwegian Foreign Minister Eide noted the conference had succeeded in reframing the issue of nuclear weapons by putting humanitarian concerns at the centre. He affirmed the responsibility borne on this issue by both nuclear-armed and non-nuclear armed states, spoke of a new sense of urgency, and of the importance of collaboration between concerned states and civil society organisations.

A follow-up conference in Mexico planned for February 2014 will further consider evidence on the catastrophic humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons and its implications.

It is realistic for global civil society to push for a political commitment arising from the Mexico conference for the commencement within a defined timeframe of negotiations on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons and providing for their elimination. ♦



## MESSAGE FROM

**HIROTSUGU TERASAKI | VICE PRESIDENT, SOKA GAKKAI | EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR PEACE AFFAIRS, SOKA GAKKAI INTERNATIONAL**

Soka Gakkai International (SGI), among the world's largest socially engaged Buddhist movements, has been promoting an international campaign called the 'People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition' to rouse public opinion and help create a global grassroots network of people dedicated to abolishing nuclear weapons.

The 2007 launch of the People's Decade commemorated the 50th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda's *Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons* delivered at a public rally in 1957. A critical component of the People's Decade has been collaborations with other international antinuclear movements.

The existence of nuclear weapons – let alone their use – can never be considered acceptable under any circumstances from the perspective of ordinary people who seek a peaceful and prosperous society. A key goal of our campaign is finding avenues to ensure that the voices and views of these ordinary citizens are part of any international policy-making processes.

Toward this end, in April 2009 SGI and the Inter Press Service (IPS) launched a joint media project for nuclear weapons abolition featuring the multi-language website 'Toward a Nuclear Free World' ([www.nuclearabolition.net](http://www.nuclearabolition.net)).

Last year in 2012, the fourth year for this project, we were fortunate to have many prominent experts and public figures offer passionate and discerning commentaries, which were posted to the



website. We were subsequently pleased to receive positive feedback from many readers – primarily ordinary citizens – located around the world. We offer our heartfelt appreciation to everyone contributing to and supporting this project.

Already during the first half of 2013 various international antinuclear initiatives and events have taken place, such as the International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Oslo, the joint statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear weapons delivered at the NPT (Treaty of the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons) PrepCom in Geneva, and President Obama's speech in Berlin reaffirming his

commitment to a world free from nuclear weapons. We welcome and support these actions.

SGI President Daisaku Ikeda has repeatedly stated that we must never allow the nascent move toward nuclear abolition in international politics stop or even falter. Being able to build the current momentum into an even larger groundswell hinges on whether members of civil society can develop a strong self-awareness as key stakeholders in the transition of the era. Our media project therefore has an important role to play in communicating ideas and information to a wider audience.

As a staunch civil society organization, SGI earnestly hopes to continue our creative collaboration with IPS in our shared commitment to contributing to a culture of peace. We are strongly determined to redouble our efforts toward the goal of nuclear weapons abolition. ◆

## 'HUMANITARIAN DIPLOMACY' FIGHTS NUKES

BY JAMSHED BARUAH FROM OSLO

For the first time, 'humanitarian diplomacy' is being deployed to drive home the need for banning nukes - though under the self-imposed exclusion of the P5, the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, who own a crushing majority of the 19,000 nuclear weapons capable of destroying the world many times over.

A first step toward humanitarian diplomacy was taken in Oslo at a Mar. 4-5 conference convened by the government of Norway. Mexico will host a follow-up meeting "in due course" and "after necessary preparations," Juan José Gómez Camacho, the country's ambassador to the UN announced.

Participants in the conference included representatives of 127 states, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and civil society, with the International Campaign for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) in the forefront.

ICAN organised a Civil Society Forum on Mar. 2-3 with the Norwegian government's support. Some 500 campaigners, scientists, physicians and other experts attended. The forum lent a vigorous dimension to a global campaign for outlawing all nuclear weapons.

ICAN representatives said they will work with governments, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other partners towards a new treaty banning nuclear weapons. ICAN project manager Magnus Lovold welcomed the 2013 Peace Proposal by Daisaku Ikeda, president of the Tokyo-based Buddhist organisation Soka Gakkai International (SGI).

Ikeda proposed that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and forward-looking governments establish an action group to draft a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) outlawing nuclear weapons - which apart

from being inhumane swallow some 105 billion dollars a year at current spending.

SGI executive director for peace affairs Hirotsugu Terasaki said that both the ICAN forum and the Oslo government conference had lent significant momentum to ushering in a world without nuclear weapons.

SGI hopes that the G8 Summit in 2015 and the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki would serve as milestones towards an expanded summit for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

A broad section of participants at the government conference expressed dismay at the decision of the P5 - the U.S., Russia, China, Britain and France - to stay away from the meeting without giving any reasons.

But many expressed interest in further exploring the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons "in ways that ensure global participation," said Norway's Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide, summarising the outcome of the conference. "States expressed their interest in continuing the discussions, and to broaden the discourse on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons."

Avoiding any caustic comments on P5's decision to boycott the conference, Eide asserted: "It is the chair's view that . . . broad participation (in the conference) reflects the increasing global concern regarding the effects of nuclear weapons detonations, as well as the recognition that this is an issue of fundamental significance to us all."

These remarks were significant considering that Norway is a founding member of the U.S.-led 28-nation transatlantic military alliance, the

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). NATO announced a “strategic concept” at its Lisbon meeting in November 2010, which “commits NATO to the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons - but reconfirms that, as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance.”

Answering a question by this correspondent, Eide insisted that Norway was committed to “creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons.” In his view, concerns about nuclear weapons proliferation have brought awareness of the continued risks all nukes pose more to the fore than at any time since the vast majority of states signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968.

Since the 2010 review conference of the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), there has been a growing, if still nascent, movement to outlaw nuclear weapons.

Some key points that emerge from scientific presentations and general discussions in Oslo are:

No state or international body would be in a position to adequately address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear weapon detonation and provide sufficient assistance to those affected. It might not be possible to establish such capacities, even if it were attempted.

The effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, irrespective of cause, will not be constrained by national borders, and will affect states and people in significant ways, regionally as well as globally.

Dr Ira Helfand from International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) explained that the widespread radioactive contamination would affect housing, food and water supplies. He said the financial costs in terms of property damage, disruption to global trade and general economic activity, and the impact on development in terms of the creation of refugees would be enormous.

The final document of the review conference notes “deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons” and reaffirms “the need for all states at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.”

This was followed by a resolution by the council of delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in November 2011, strongly appealing to all states “to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement.”

Subsequently, at the first session of the preparatory committee for the 2015 NPT review conference held in May 2012, 16 countries led by Norway and Switzerland issued a joint statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament, stating that “it is of great concern that, even after the end of the Cold War, the threat of nuclear annihilation remains part of the 21st century international security environment.”

They stressed: “It is of utmost importance that these weapons never be used again, under any circumstances. . . . All States must intensify their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.” In October 2012, this statement, with minor revisions, was presented to the first committee of the UN General Assembly by 35 member and observer states.

In line with broad sentiment, ICRC president Peter Maurer welcomed the Norwegian government’s initiative to convene the conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Although nuclear weapons have been debated in military, technical and geopolitical terms for decades, it is astounding that states have never before come together to address their humanitarian consequences, he said.  
[IPS | March 7, 2013] ◆

*Jamshed Baruah is a disarmament correspondent for IDN-InDepthNews [www.indepthnews.net].*

## TRAILBLAZING CONFERENCE URGES BAN ON NUKES

BY RAMESH JAURA\* FROM OSLO

There are miles and miles to go before a world without nuclear weapons becomes a reality. But a significant step towards banning atomic arsenal capable of mass annihilation has been taken in Oslo, the capital of Norway, which is an ardent member of the 28-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Responding to President Barack Obama's Prague speech in April 2009, NATO committed itself to "the goal of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons". But as part of a "strategic concept" endorsed at its Lisbon meeting in November 2010, it reconfirmed that, "as long as there are nuclear weapons in the world, NATO will remain a nuclear Alliance".

Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide does not perceive any contradiction between the NATO strategic concept and a groundbreaking intergovernmental conference he convened in Oslo on March 4-5 to focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

In fact, he is of the view that concerns about nuclear weapons proliferation have brought awareness of the continued risks all nukes pose more to the fore than at any time since the vast majority of states signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968.

Since the 2010 review conference of the parties to the NPT, there has been a growing, if still nascent, movement to outlaw nuclear weapons. The final document of the review conference notes "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and reaffirms "the need for all states at all times to



comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law."

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The significance of the gathering in Oslo lies in the fact that for the first time in the 67-year old history of official and informal discussions on nuclear disarmament, representatives of 127 nations met to discuss the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

They were joined by various UN agencies, the Red Cross and the Red Crescent movement as well as civil society and faith organizations such as the International Campaign for Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and Soka Gakkai International (SGI). ↻

*Photo above: Norwegian Foreign Minister Eide*

*Credit: nettavisen.no*

The urgency of the humanitarian impact is underlined by the fact that 19,000 nukes which official and unofficial nuclear nations have accumulated since 1945, when the U.S. dropped the first atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are capable of destroying the world many times over.

This shocking fact motivated ICAN to organize a Civil Society Forum on March 2-3 with the Norwegian government's support. Some 500 campaigners, scientists, physicians and other experts attended. The forum lent a vigorous dimension to a global campaign for outlawing all nuclear weapons.

ICAN representatives said they will work with governments, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other partners such as the Tokyo-based lay Buddhist organization SGI towards a new treaty banning nuclear weapons. All the more so because SGI has been consistently pleading for abolition of all nuclear weapons.

Originally inspired by second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda's 1957 anti-nuclear weapons declaration, SGI President Daisaku Ikeda publishes a peace proposal every year which casts a close look at the interrelation between core Buddhist concepts and the diverse challenges global society faces in the effort to realize peace and human security. He has also made proposals touching on issues such as education reform, the environment, and the United Nations.

In the 2013 Peace Proposal Ikeda urged non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and forward-looking governments to establish an action group to draft a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) outlawing nuclear weapons - which apart from being inhumane swallow some 105 billion dollars a year at current spending.

SGI executive director for peace affairs Hirotsugu Terasaki, who attended the Oslo conference, said that both the ICAN forum and the Oslo government conference had lent significant momentum to ushering in a world without nuclear weapons.

SGI hopes that the G8 Summit in 2015 and the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki would serve as milestones towards an expanded summit for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The Oslo conference took place outside of the framework of the 65-member United Nations Conference on Disarmament. Though the 'official' nuclear powers USA, Russia, China, UK and France as well as the non-official nuke states Israel and North Korea refused to attend, India and Pakistan - said to be in possession of atomic weapons - and Iran, suspected of working on a bomb, joined.

The conference was a success not the least because Mexico announced that it would host the next meeting. A wide range of states and organisations agreed that an understanding of the global humanitarian consequences of nuclear detonations should be the starting point for urgent action to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons.

As Dr Rebecca Johnson, co-chair of ICAN points out, the significance of this announcement should not be underestimated. "In 1967, at the height of the Cold War, Mexico was the driving force behind the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which prohibited nuclear weapons across the whole of Latin America and the Caribbean, she says. This "nuclear-weapon-free zone" led to further prohibition zones being established in Africa, the South Pacific, South-East Asia and Central Asia," avers Johnson.

These zones, she adds, have proved more of a success than the painfully slow pigeon steps undertaken by some nuclear-armed states, which in recent years are constantly undermined by massive governmental investments to modernise, refine and renew the sizeable arsenals that they retain. [IDN- March 10, 2013] ◆

*Ramesh Jaura is global editor of IDN and its sister publication Global Perspectives, chief editor of IPS Germany as well as editorial board member of Other News. He is also executive president of Global Cooperation Council, board member of IPS international and global coordinator of SGI-IPS project.*

## ANTI-NUKE MOVEMENT GOES TO THE GULF

BY BAHER KAMAL FROM MANAMA

After a week of activities in Oslo during the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, major anti-nuclear campaigners moved on to the Bahraini capital, Manama, in yet another step towards the abolition of atomic weapons.

“Nuclear weapons - the most inhuman and destructive of all tools of war - are at the peak of a pyramid of violence in this increasingly interdependent world,” said campaigners during a joint press conference on March 12 in Manama. “The threat of atomic weapons is not in the past,” the organisers said. “It is a major crisis today.”

Co-organised by the Bahrain Centre for Strategic, International and Energy Studies (Derasat), Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), the United Nations Information Center (UNIC) and Inter Press Service (IPS), the exhibition – “From a Culture of Violence to a Culture of Peace: Towards a World Free from Nuclear Weapons” – was shown in Manama from March 12 to March 23.

“This exhibition - the first ever in an Arab country - (represents another) step toward making the human aspiration to live in a world free from nuclear weapons a reality,” SGI’s executive director for peace affairs, Hirotsugu Terasaki, told IPS.

“The very existence of these weapons - the most inhuman of all - implies a major danger,” said Terasaki, a high-level official of Soka Gakkai Buddhist organisation that promotes international peace and security, with more than 12 million members globally.

Asked about the argument used by nuclear powers that the possession of such weapons is a guarantee of safety and security - the so-called “deterrence doctrine” - Terasaki said, “The world should now move beyond this myth.”

“Security”, he said, begins with basic human needs: shelter, clean air to breathe, water to drink, food to eat. People need to work, to care for their health, to be protected from violence, according to the SGI exhibition.

Terasaki believes nuclear weapons differ from “conventional” weapons in two main regards. “First is their overwhelming destructive power. The atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 delivered a blast equivalent to about 13 kilotons of TNT,” he said. Some 140,000 people lost their lives just at the end of that year, he said.

“Since then nuclear weapons with yields of more than 50 megatons have been developed, several thousand times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima.”

Whereas conventional weapons can, at least to some degree, distinguish between military and civilian targets, nuclear weapons kill indiscriminately, destroying all life on a massive scale, Terasaki averred.

“The second point to emphasise is the radioactivity they leave behind. After fires caused by the explosion are extinguished and silence returns, radioactivity (lingers on) for months and can cause leukaemia or other diseases, even affecting people who only enter the area after the bombing. These diseases are often inherited by sufferers’ offspring.”

Before moving to Bahrain, the SGI exhibition had been shown in more than 230 venues in 29 countries and territories. Manama is the first city in the Middle East region to host it. The contents of the exhibition have been translated into eight languages including Arabic now. Among its key objectives in Bahrain is to contribute to the discussion on a Middle East nuclear weapons free zone. ☺

“What we celebrate today reflects a sincere expression of the true spirit of Islam,” Bahraini Minister for Foreign Affairs Ghanim bin-Fadl Al-Buainain said at a press conference on March 10.

“The pure meaning of Islam is ‘peace’,” he said, “but unfortunately Islam’s image and principles have (today) been distorted...”

Al-Buainain also referred to the third nuclear test carried out by North Korea in February, saying that the biggest threat to “international peace and security is the global and regional arms race, especially nuclear arms”.

He also called attention to Iran’s nuclear programme, “which maintains its peaceful functions”. However, this programme has “far-reaching effects on the environment, wildlife and marine life...as well as security risks in the Gulf region if it transforms into a militaristic nuclear programme,” added the Bahraini minister.

Speaking at the same press conference, Japan’s ambassador in Manama, Shigeki Sumi, reaffirmed Japan’s commitment to abolishing nuclear weapons, since “Japan has been the sole country that suffered from the catastrophic human consequences of nuclear bombing during World War II”.

### Diplomacy

Nasser Burdestani, ICAN’s regional campaigner in Bahrain who played a key role in organising the anti-nuclear exhibition, stressed the need to advance the effort of so-called ‘humanitarian diplomacy’. “Biological weapons were prohibited in 1975; chemical weapons in 1997; land mines in 1999, and cluster bombs in 2010. It is now time to abolish nuclear weapons,” said Burdestani.

Two major anti-nuclear events in Oslo preceded this historic exhibition: the ICAN Civil Society Forum (March 2-3) that brought together more than 500 campaigners, experts, scientists and physicians, followed by an inter-governmental conference from March 4 to March 5

organised by Norway’s Foreign Affairs ministry, which drew representatives from 127 states, the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross, in addition to civil society.

Notable at the Oslo conference was the complete absence of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council.

### 4,400 nukes operational

At the start of 2012 eight states possessed approximately 4,400 operational nuclear weapons, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

“Nearly 2,000 of these are kept in a state of high operational alert. If all nuclear warheads are counted - operational warheads, spares, those in both active and inactive storage, and intact warheads scheduled for dismantlement the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan and Israel together possess a total of approximately 19,000 nuclear weapons,” SIPRI reported.

Meanwhile, SGI’s president and eminent Buddhist leader, Daisaku Ikeda, has launched a global peace proposal, a blueprint consisting of three major proposals that will serve as a launching point for the larger goal of total global disarmament by the year 2030.

The proposal expresses the hope that NGOs and forward-looking governments will establish an action group to initiate, before the year’s end, the process of drafting a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) outlawing nuclear weapons, which swallow some 105 billion dollars annually.

In a study entitled ‘Don’t Bank on the Bomb’, ICAN reported that more than 300 banks, pension funds, insurance companies and asset managers in 30 countries have invested heavily in nuclear arms producers, while 20 companies are involved in the manufacture, maintenance and modernisation of U.S., British, French and Indian nuclear forces. [IPS | March 11, 2013] ◆

## ICAN RESOLVED TO BAN NUKES

BY RAMESH JAURA FROM OSLO

A global movement to outlaw nuclear weapons is in the making with significant support from Norway, which is protected by the U.S. nuclear umbrella as a member of the 28-nation North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). This emerged from a two-day ICAN Civil Society Forum in Oslo.

Some 400 youthful participants gathered in the Norwegian capital on March 2 and 3 ahead of an ‘international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons’, which the five ‘official’ nuclear powers that are also permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council - United States, Russia, China, France and U.K. - have boycotted in a concerted move that surprised officials and non-governmental organizations at the ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) Forum.

The Forum concluded with a selection of young ICAN campaigners - from Egypt, Nigeria, South Africa, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Germany and Sweden - vowing to mobilize massive public support to “ban the bomb”.

Their resolve was strengthened, they said, particularly after listening to harrowing testimonies of the survivors of the bombs that fell on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. They also received a crash course on the medical, social, climate and nuclear famine consequences of nuclear weapons.

Dr Alan Robock explained that a small exchange of a few bombs between India and Pakistan would throw up enough smoke into the atmosphere to effectively block out the sun for a decade, mostly in the Northern Hemisphere, reduce global temperatures to create a nuclear winter and cause famine for billions.

Dr Ira Helfand from Nobel Laureate International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) described the stark consequences

of a bomb on New York, for a three kilometre radius around ground zero, temperatures would be greater than the surface of the sun after a millionth of a second, for the next 3 km the shock wave would cause destruction and death of everything living, the next zone of 3 km would experience a fireball as all flammable material would instantaneously combust and suck up all the available oxygen.

Further out the devastation would be less but still significant. These would be the immediate effects without the subsequent radiation poisoning and climate effects, he said.

Tony Robinson, international spokesperson for the organisation World without Wars and Violence, noted that the scientists’ models were just that, models, but as they had stressed, their numbers were always underestimates of what the reality could be. There was no doubt however that planet Earth will experience a nuclear winter, crops will fail for years, and humanity will be brought to the edge of disaster. And in their models they work with the detonation of a small fraction of the world’s 19,000 nuclear warheads.

Wrapping up the Forum, Thomas Nash, a member of the steering group of ICAN said: “The government meeting hasn’t started yet but I feel like we have already achieved a lot. We’ve all been saying that governments need to focus on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and now 130 governments are gathering in this city to talk about just that.

“We made this happen. No matter what goes down during the conference we should remember that. We’ve also got the P5 on the run.” Nash, now working at Article 36, which is part of ICAN UK, was an active campaigner for banning cluster munitions. A Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) was signed in Oslo in 2008 - underlining an important role played by Norway in preparing the ground for this international treaty. ➡



The convention addresses the humanitarian consequences and unacceptable harm to civilians caused by cluster bombs, through a categorical prohibition and a framework for action. One third of all recorded cluster munitions casualties are children. 60% of cluster bomb casualties are injured while undertaking their normal activities.

Nash said the ICAN Forum had “felt like just the latest step in a history of effective civil society mobilisation to outlaw and eliminate weapons of mass destruction”. It had already prohibited two out of the three types of weapons of mass destruction, through the ban treaties on chemical and biological weapons. Nuclear testing had been banned as well.

“In these initiatives, civil society mobilised on the basis of the unacceptability of the humanitarian and health consequences of these weapons,” added Nash. He recalled that some 20 years ago as a young New Zealand high school student he took part in a delegation of activists who travelled to France to protest against French nuclear testing in the Pacific, hosted by Mouvement de la Paix.

The Forum also heard ICAN co-chair and director of Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, Dr Rebecca Johnson, set out why a ban treaty is practical, achievable and doable.

Gry Larsen, Norway’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, told participants that the elimination of nuclear weapons is not a utopia and that disarmament is about real people. Martin Sheen, veteran actor and former President of the United States on TV’s *The West Wing*, told the Civil Society Forum that if Gandhi and Martin Luther King were alive today they would be part of ICAN. Sheen has been donating time and money to many charities and has received two awards for his humanitarian work.

Nash appeared to be expressing the predominant view at the Forum, when he said: “The only thing that can prevent us from getting a ban on nuclear weapons is if we don’t believe it is possible.”

But, he added: “If we stick together and build our campaign respectfully and inclusively over the coming weeks and months we will find ourselves in the midst of a process to negotiate a ban on nuclear weapons before we know it. I think once we get going in that process, we could be pretty hard to stop.”

ICAN representatives said they will be working with governments, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other partners towards a new treaty banning nuclear weapons. In this context, ICAN project manager Magnus Lovold welcomed the 2013 Peace Proposal by Dr Daisaku Ikeda, President of the Tokyo-based lay Buddhist organisation Soka Gakkai International (SGI).

Dr Ikeda expressed the hope that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and forward-looking governments will establish an action group to initiate before year’s end the process of drafting a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) outlawing nuclear weapons, which are not only inhumane but also swallow some \$105 billion year after year.

SGI participated in the Forum with an exhibition titled ‘Everything You Treasure - For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons’, which was launched in Hiroshima in August 2012 at the 20th World Congress of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. The exhibition has been jointly created by SGI and ICAN.

It consists of a total of 40 panels that cover nuclear weapons issues from 12 perspectives: humanitarian, environmental, medical, economic, human rights, energy, scientific, political, spiritual, gender, generational and security.

SGI Vice President and Executive Director for Peace Affairs Hirotsugu Terasaki, who was accompanied by Program Director for Peace Affairs Kimiaki Kawai, said the exhibition also intended to commemorate the previous year the 55th anniversary of second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda’s Declaration Calling for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons made on September 8, 1957. [IDN-InDepthNews - March 3, 2013] ◆

## MOST INHUMANE OF WEAPONS

VIEWPOINT BY DAISAKU IKEDA IN TOKYO

*In this column, Daisaku Ikeda -- a Japanese Buddhist philosopher, peacebuilder and president of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI) - presents three proposals for warding off a possible nuclear catastrophe: making disarmament a priority of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); initiating a negotiation process for a Nuclear Weapons Convention; and holding an expanded summit toward a nuclear-weapon-free world.*

I believe that most of the world's citizens would agree that nuclear weapons should be considered inhumane. It is encouraging to see that there is now a growing, if still nascent, movement to outlaw nuclear weapons based on this premise.

This was highlighted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), whose Final Document noted a "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and reaffirmed "the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law".

Following this, in May 2012, sixteen countries led by Norway and Switzerland issued a joint statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament.

On March 4-5 this year, an international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons will be held in Oslo, Norway. Prior to this conference, on March 2-3, the International Campaign for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) will organise a Civil Society Forum there to demonstrate that a treaty banning nuclear weapons is both possible and urgently needed.

There have recently been signs, even within the nuclear-weapon states, of changing attitudes regarding the utility of these weapons. In a speech at Hankuk University in Seoul, Republic of Korea, on Mar. 26, 2012, U.S. President Barack Obama stated: "My administration's nu-



clear posture recognises that the massive nuclear arsenal we inherited from the Cold War is poorly suited to today's threats, including nuclear terrorism."

Further, a statement adopted at the NATO Summit in May 2012 noted: "The circumstances in which any use of nuclear weapons might have to be contemplated are extremely remote."

Both of these statements point to the lessened centrality of nuclear weapons in national security thinking.

The logic of nuclear weapons possession is also being challenged from a number of other perspectives.

It is estimated that annual aggregate expenditure on nuclear weapons globally is around 105 billion dollars.

This makes clear the enormity of the burden placed on societies simply by the continued possession of these weapons. If these financial resources were redirected domestically to health, social welfare and education programmes or to development aid for other countries, the positive impact on people's lives and dignity would be incalculable.

In April of 2012, important new research on the effects of nuclear war on the environment was announced in the report "Nuclear Famine". Issued by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), this report predicts that even a relatively small-scale nuclear exchange could cause major climate change and that the impact on countries far-distant

from the combatant nations would result in famine affecting more than one billion people.

### Three proposals

In view of these developments, I would like to make three proposals to help shape the contours of a new, sustainable society, one in which all people can live in dignity.

*First*, to make disarmament a key theme of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are under discussion within the United Nations. Specifically, I propose that halving world military expenditures relative to 2010 levels and abolishing nuclear weapons and all other weapons judged inhumane under international law be included as targets for achievement by the year 2030.

*Second*, to initiate the negotiation process for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, with the goal of agreement on an initial draft by 2015. To this end, the international community must engage in active debate centered on the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons.

*Third*, to hold an expanded summit toward a nuclear-weapon-free world. The G8 Summit in 2015 – the seventieth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki – would be an appropriate opportunity for such a summit, which should include the additional participation of other nuclear-weapon states, representatives of the United Nations, as well as members of the five existing Nuclear

Weapon-Free Zones and those states which have taken a lead in calling for nuclear abolition.

In this regard, I am encouraged by the following words from Obama's speech in Korea: "...I believe the U.S. has a unique responsibility to act; - indeed, we have a moral obligation. I say this as president of the only nation ever to use nuclear weapons. ... Most of all, I say it as a father, who wants my two young daughters to grow up in a world where everything they know and love can't be instantly wiped out."

These words express a yearning that cannot be subsumed even after all political elements and security requirements have been taken fully into consideration.

It is the statement of a single human being rising above the differences of national interest or ideological stance. Such a way of thinking can help us "untie" the Gordian knot that has too long bound together the ideas of national security and nuclear weapons possession.

There is no place more conducive to considering the full significance of life in the nuclear age than Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This was seen when the G8 Summit of Lower House Speakers was convened in Hiroshima in 2008. The kind of expanded summit I am calling for would inherit that spirit and solidify momentum toward a world free from nuclear weapons. It would then become the launching point for a larger effort for global disarmament aiming toward the year 2030.

[IPS | February 21, 2013] ◆



## SAUDI ARABIA SEEN UNLIKELY TO SEEK NUKES IF IRAN GETS ONE

BY JIM LOBE IN WASHINGTON

Challenging what has become conventional wisdom here, a new report released here Feb. 19 by an influential think tank argues that Iran's neighbours - Saudi Arabia in particular - are unlikely to pursue nuclear weapons if Iran obtains one.

The 49-page report, "Atomic Kingdom: If Iran Builds the Bomb, Will Saudi Arabia Be Next?", notes that Riyadh would indeed be "highly motivated to acquire some form of nuclear deterrent to counter an Iranian bomb".

But it would be far more likely to seek shelter under a U.S. nuclear umbrella than to either launch its own weapons programme or buy one from Pakistan despite its close relations with Islamabad, according to the report, which was released by the Center for a New American Security (CNAS), a think tank from which President Barack Obama has drawn a number of its senior Pentagon and State Department officials.

North Korea tested in 2006, and no neighbours have followed their example. Use of nuclear weapons can be deterred; their spread contained; and global regimes survive even severe shocks to the system.

"...Saudi Arabia would likely pursue a more aggressive version of its current conventional defense and civilian nuclear hedging strategy while seeking out an external nuclear security guarantee from either Pakistan or the United States," according to the report whose lead author, Colin Kahl, served as the top Middle East policy official at the Defence Department for most of Obama's first term.

"And ultimately, a potential U.S. nuclear guarantee would likely prove more feasible and attractive to the Saudis than a Pakistani al-



ternative," said the report, which was co-authored by Melissa Dalton and Matthew Irvine.

The new study, which challenges a core contention pushed hard by both Israel and successive U.S. administrations - that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon or "breakout capacity" would set off a rush by other regional powers to obtain one - comes at a critical moment.

After a seven-month hiatus, Iran and the so-called the so-called P5+1 (the U.S., Britain, France, Russia, China plus Germany) will resume talks on Tehran nuclear programme in Kazakhstan next week. Hopes for a breakthrough remain low, with most observers insisting that major progress is unlikely until after a new Iranian president takes office in June.

Failure to make any progress, however, is almost certain to increase pressure on the Obama administration to get tougher on Tehran, most likely by backing up its announced policy of "preventing" Tehran from acquiring a nuclear weapon with additional sanctions and more credible threats of military force.

That is likely to be the central message of the annual policy conference of the powerful American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) here Mar. 3-5 at which virtually every lawmaker in the U.S. Congress is expected to make an appearance.

Israeli and U.S. officials have long argued that a nuclear-armed Iran is "unacceptable" precisely because, in their view, "deterrence" - a key component of the containment strategy deployed against the Soviet Union - won't work. ☞

Some Israeli leaders, notably Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, have insisted that Tehran's religious "messianism" would make it undeterrable.

Both Israeli leaders and U.S. officials have also argued that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapons would set off a chain reaction in which Tehran's regional rivals - Turkey, Egypt, and most especially Saudi Arabia - would feel compelled to urgently follow suit, thus creating a nuclear tinderbox in one of the world's most volatile and energy-rich regions.

The latter argument, strongly promoted by the Israel lobby, neo-conservative think tanks and commentators, and some non-proliferation hawks, has become conventional wisdom here. But it "is probably wrong," according to the report.

Consistent with the administration's view, the new CNAS study stressed that preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon should remain the policy goal since "even a small risk of a poly-nuclear Middle East should be avoided." □

However, "(a)t the same time, quiet planning to establish a deterrence and containment architecture - including a possible nuclear guarantee to Saudi Arabia - should begin in case preventive measures (up to and including military force) fail," the report says.

Coming from Kahl and CNAS, that recommendation will no doubt feed suspicions by neo-conservatives and Israel lobby groups that Obama, civilian nuclear co-operation if the Saudis agree to strict limits on its programme.

Using both negative and positive incentives, Washington could also press Pakistan, which, like Egypt, does not consider Iran a direct existential threat, not to transfer a weapon to Saudi Arabia. Predictions that the acquisition of nuclear weapons by one country in a region will trigger a re-active proliferation by its neighbours have most often proven false, according to the report.

despite his stated commitment to prevention, is determined to avoid any action that could involve the U.S. in yet another war in the Muslim world.

While it focuses almost exclusively on Saudi Arabia, the new report argues that neither Egypt nor Turkey is likely to respond to Iran's acquisition of a nuclear weapon with a weapons programme of its own - Egypt, because it does not see Tehran as an "existential threat" and has so many other problems to deal with; Turkey, because it already has a credible nuclear deterrent as a member of NATO, among other reasons.

On the other hand, Riyadh - some of whose leaders have publicly suggested they would pursue a bomb if Iran got one - have genuine fears that Iran could act more aggressively, either directly or through proxies, behind a nuclear shield.

But the report concludes that these fears are unlikely to overcome key "disincentives" against its going nuclear. These include the prospect of risking an attack by Israel, possibly rupturing the critical security ties with the U.S. itself, damaging the country's international reputation, and making the Kingdom the target of international economic sanctions.

The U.S. could also use positive incentives to ensure Riyadh does not emulate Iran. In addition to providing Riyadh with a nuclear guarantee, Washington should be prepared to significantly expand

It noted that in the nearly 50 years since China tested a weapon, only four additional countries - Israel, India, Pakistan, and North Korea - have gone nuclear, while seven others have either given up their weapons or ended highly developed programmes, in part due to the disincentives that Saudi Arabia would also face. "I used to believe that a cascade of proliferation would be inevitable if North Korea or Iran went nuclear, but we can't ignore the historical evidence," Joe Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a nuclear disarmament group, told IPS. ☺

“I used to believe that a cascade of proliferation would be inevitable if North Korea or Iran went nuclear, but we can’t ignore the historical evidence,” Joe Cirincione, president of the Ploughshares Fund, a nuclear disarmament group, told IPS.

“North Korea tested in 2006, and no neighbours have followed their example. Use of nuclear weapons can be deterred; their spread contained; and global regimes survive even severe shocks to the system.”

Paul Pillar, a former top CIA analyst for the Near East and South Asia, said the report helped pierce through the “fog of conventional wisdom (about Iran and the region) consisting of unexamined assumptions, ...one of which is that an Iranian nuclear weapon would trigger a cascade of proliferation in the Middle East. “It demonstrates that the application of some careful and informed



analysis leads that assumption to fall apart,” he told IPS in an email exchange.

But Chas Freeman, a former ambassador to Saudi Arabia, predicted that the Saudis would be more likely to seek a Pakistani nuclear guarantee than one from Washington.

“In circumstances in which Saudi Arabia would face nuclear threats from both Iran and Israel, a U.S. guarantee would not apply to Israel,” he said in an email message from Riyadh where he is currently visiting.

“After the U.S. decision to abandon (Egyptian) President Mubarak and his regime, there is not much inclination in the region to rely on American support. For those reasons and many others, Saudi Arabia would probably turn to Pakistan rather than to the United States as its nuclear guarantor.”  
[IPS | February 20, 2013] ◆

Picture on 18: Cover page of the page report “Atomic Kingdom: If Iran Builds the Bomb, Will Saudi Arabia Be Next?”

Credit Saudi Arabia map: World Factbok

## WORLD'S NUCLEAR ENVIRONMENT REMAINS POLITICALLY TOXIC

BY THALIF DEEN IN NEW YORK

The world's nuclear environment has increasingly turned politically toxic, replete with threats, accusations and open defiance of Security Council resolutions.

A long outstanding international conference on a nuclear weapons-free Middle East, to be hosted by Finland, is still far from reality. So is a proposed Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) aimed at eliminating weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

And on February 11, a renegade North Korea defied the United Nations by conducting its third nuclear test, while Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei reserved his country's right to nuclear weapons in a region where Israel's nuclear arsenal has the implicit blessings of the Western world.

"We believe nuclear weapons must be eliminated," said Khamenei, "We don't want to build atomic weapons." But if Iran was forced to do so, he warned, "No power could stop us."

So long as these weapons exist, there is a very real possibility that they will be used, either by accident or design.

As the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapons free world keeps receding, the leader of a Tokyo-based lay Buddhist non-governmental organisation (NGO) has launched a global campaign for a nuclear summit of world leaders in 2015.

Daisaku Ikeda, president of Soka Gakkai International (SGI), says the annual G8 Summit in 2015 could be an "expanded summit" focusing on a nuclear weapons-free world and marking the 70th anniversary of the devastating atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



"This would be an appropriate opportunity for such a nuclear summit," he adds.

Tim Wright of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) told IPS his organisation supports the call by Ikeda and others to begin a process in 2013 aimed at achieving a treaty banning nuclear weapons.

"We urge all nations, including those which are part of a nuclear alliance, to participate constructively in such a process," he said.

The involvement of NGOs will also be essential, Wright pointed out. "And a global ban on nuclear weapons is feasible, necessary and urgent.

"So long as these weapons exist," he argued, "there is a very real possibility that they will be used, either by accident or design. Any such use would have catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences."

In his 2013 Peace Proposal 'Compassion, Wisdom and Courage: Building a Global Society of Peace and Creative' released last week, Ikeda offers three concrete proposals.

First, to make disarmament a key theme of the U.N.'s post-2015 economic agenda, including Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Specifically, he proposes halving world military expenditures relative to 2010 levels and abolishing nuclear weapons and all other weapons judged inhumane under international law.

These should be included as targets for achievement by the year 2030. ➡

Second, initiate the negotiation process for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, with the goal of agreement on an initial draft by 2015. Japan, as a country that has experienced nuclear attack, should play a leading role in the realisation of a NWC, he asserts.

Further, it should undertake the kind of confidence-building measures that are a necessary predicate to the establishment of a Northeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and to creating the conditions for the global abolition of nuclear weapons.

“To this end, we must engage in active and multifaceted debate centered on the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons to broadly shape international public opinion,” says Ikeda.

“If possible, Germany and Japan, which are the scheduled G8 host countries for 2015 and 2016, respectively, should agree to reverse that order, enabling the convening of this meeting in Hiroshima or Nagasaki,” Ikeda notes.

Third, an expanded G8 summit in 2015 which could double as a nuclear summit of world leaders.

In past peace proposals, he has urged that the 2015 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) be held in Hiro-



shima and Nagasaki as a vehicle for realising a nuclear abolition summit.

Nevertheless, he says, the logistical issues involved in bringing together the representatives of almost 190 countries may dictate the meeting be held at the U.N. headquarters in New York, as is customary.

“In that event, the G8 Summit scheduled to be held several months after the NPT Review Conference would provide an excellent opportunity for an ex-

panded group of world leaders to grapple with this critical issue,” according to Ikeda.

Ikeda says SGI’s efforts to grapple with the nuclear weapons issue are based on the recognition that the very existence of these weapons represents the ultimate negation of the dignity of life.

“At the same time, nuclear weapons serve as a prism through which to perceive new perspectives on ecological integrity, economic development and human rights,” he says. This in turn, he says, “helps us identify the elements that will shape the contours of a new, sustainable society, one in which all people can live in dignity.” [IPS | February 19, 2013] ◆

*Picture above: UN Security Council | Credit: Wikimedia Commons*



## HIGH-ALERT NUKES AS IF THE COLD WAR DIDN'T END

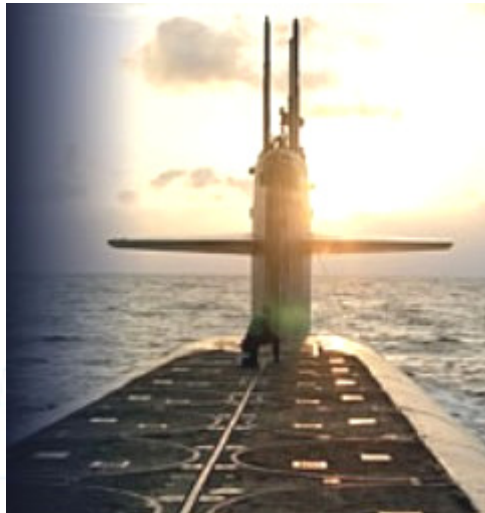
BY JAMSHED BARUAH IN BERLIN

A new report by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has come to a worrisome conclusion that the United States and Russia continue to maintain large numbers of nuclear forces on high levels of alert, ready to launch within minutes, as if the Cold War - which is believed to have ended more than two decades ago - was going on unabated.

Together with France and Britain, the four countries deploy approximately 2000 warheads ready for use on short notice - more nuclear warheads than held by all the other states in possession of nuclear weapons combined, finds the report titled Reducing Alert Rates of Nuclear Weapons, co-authored by Hans M. Kristensen, Director of the Nuclear Information Project at the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) and Matthew McKinzie from the Natural Resources of Defense Council.

"These current alert levels - which are deeply rooted in Cold War thinking, vastly exceed current and foreseeable security needs, and undercut efforts to reduce the salience and role of nuclear weapons - are sustained by a circular (though flawed) logic, whereby U.S. nuclear forces are maintained on alert because Russian nuclear forces are on alert, and vice versa for Russian forces. Put in another way, if nuclear forces were not on alert, there would be no requirement to keep nuclear forces on alert," says the report.

As the authors of the report point out, the international community favours reducing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons and many retired military officials argue that doing so is possible with proper care and planning.



"Yet the nuclear establishments of the four nuclear-alert countries oppose de-alerting nuclear forces and argue that doing so would create crisis instability and be difficult and expensive to verify. Their arguments have so far largely managed to hold proponents of nuclear de-alerting at bay from effecting changes to alert nuclear postures," notes the report.

According to the study, the very name of the current U.S. strategic nuclear war plan - Strategic Deterrence and Global Strike (Operational Plan 8010-08 - reflects this dual mission of U.S. nuclear forces.

The strategic deterrence part of the U.S. plan is focused on deploying a secure retaliatory capability to deter an adversary from attacking the United States and its allies. The global strike part of the plan is focused on a myriad of war-fighting scenarios including the failure of deterrence.

The Nuclear Weapons Employment Policy on which this plan is based - NUWEP-04, signed by Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld on April 19, 2004 - states in part: "U.S. nuclear forces must be capable of, and be seen to be capable of, destroying those critical war-making and war-supporting assets and capabilities that a potential enemy leadership values most and that it would rely on to achieve its own objectives in a post-war world".

According to the report, this dual mission is also reflected by the Obama administration's ongoing post-NPR (Nuclear Posture Review), which is intended to ask, in the words of a senior Pentagon official: "What are the guiding concepts for employing nuclear weapons to deter adversaries, and what are the guiding concepts for ending a

nuclear conflict on the least catastrophic terms if one has already started?”. The fact is that current U.S. nuclear weapons planning is based upon two interrelated but nonetheless different objectives: deterrence and war-fighting.

The report’s authors caution advocates of de-alerting to be clear about the distinctions between these two objectives, otherwise they will not address detractors’ concerns. “Crisis escalation control is central to the arguments of de-alerting opponents and evident in a series of limited-strike options embedded in the strategic war plan for selective and adaptive targeting of adversary forces and infrastructure to stop escalation and win the war. It is at this stage in a crisis, they argue, after non-nuclear hostilities have broken out, that a nuclear re-alerting race would be most dangerous because it could prompt a nuclear-weapon state to launch its nuclear weapons first.

As a hypothetical example, notes the report, as Russian ICBMs (Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles) return to a state of alert, there would be a strong incentive for Russia to strike immediately at U.S. nuclear submarine bases, thereby potentially destroying large numbers of the adversary’s strategic nuclear weapons with only a few attacking warheads, as both sides desperately race to alert status.

There would certainly be risks of any crisis escalating - alert forces are no guarantee against that. But the re-alerting race argument is a “straw man”. First, it ignores that U.S. and Russian nuclear postures today already include plans to “generate” forces in a crisis, surging and dispersing forces, and increasing alert rates and warhead loading.

Although not re-alerting from a completely de-alerted state, those strategic force generation plans would, if executed, have a high probability of being interpreted by the opponent as preparations of strike and thus trigger nuclear force generation on the other side. Therefore, if a re-alerting race is destabilizing in future de-alerted nuclear postures, logically it is also destabilizing today.

Second, nuclear forces can be structured to prevent a re-alerting race, unlike in the previous example, which indeed is a less desirable situation. In fact the strategic nuclear forces of the United States and Russia can be structured in such a way that a stable deterrent whole is built from vulnerable, de-alerted parts.

But the idea that nuclear conflict can somehow be managed once it starts is highly dubious, the report points out. For two large nuclear powers it is a fallacy to expect that either side would back down if the other side started using nuclear weapons in order to dictate its terms for ending hostilities.

“Maintaining alert forces against a smaller nuclear adversary that does not have nuclear forces on alert could push such an adversary toward adopting an alert posture or, as in the case of China, lead to development of more capable mobile nuclear systems in an attempt to reduce vulnerability to an opponent’s alert nuclear forces.

A smaller adversary would not be able to ‘win’ but could still inflict considerable damage with a limited number of weapons,” states the report. [IDN-InDepthNews - February 18, 2013] ◆

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*Photo on page 23: The Ohio-class ballistic-missile submarine USS Wyoming (SSBN 742) approaches Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Georgia. Wyoming is the 17th submarine in the Ohio-class and the fourth US Naval ship to be named after the 44th state of the Union.*

*(US Navy photo by Lt. Rebecca Rebarich/Released).*

## NORTH KOREA DEFIES WORLD BODY WITH THIRD NUKE TEST

BY THALIF DEEN IN NEW YORK

North Korea, which conducted its third nuclear test on February 11, is following closely in the heavy footsteps of Israel as one of the world's most intransigent nations, ignoring Security Council resolutions and defying the international community.

"Israel has the United States as its patron saint," says a Middle Eastern diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, "and North Korea has China's protective arm as an enduring shield."

Still, three Security Council resolutions - in 2006, 2009 and 2013 - critical of North Korea's nuclear programme and tightening sanctions on Pyongyang - had the blessings of China, a permanent member with veto powers.

"Giving status to those who flout the world's collective security treaties such as the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the NPT is like a slap in the face to the law-abiding majority..."

But the harshest of possible sanctions - a naval blockade, an oil embargo or a cutoff of economic aid from China - have escaped Security Council resolutions, at least so far.

The 15-member Council met in an emergency session on February 12 and issued a predictable statement condemning the test as "a grave violation" of its three resolutions and describing North Korea as a country which is "a clear threat to international peace and security".

When the Council adopted its third resolution last January, it expressed a determination to take "significant action" in the event of a "further" nuclear test by North Korea.

But that "significant action" will have to wait another day.

On February 12, the Council claimed it "will begin work immediately on appropriate measures" in an upcoming, possibly watered down, resolution.

Currently, there are five declared nuclear weapon states, namely the United States, Britain, Russia, France and China, all five permanent members of the Security Council (P5), along with three undeclared nuclear weapon states, India, Pakistan and Israel.

The three undeclared nuclear powers have all refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), as against the five declared nuclear powers who are states parties to the treaty.

Dr. Rebecca Johnson, co-chair of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, told IPS that the logic and optics of nuclear deterrence means that North Korea's tests are designed to convince the United States (at least) that it has the ability to make and deliver nuclear warheads.

"It is entirely counterproductive to talk about the countries that conduct nuclear tests or deploy nuclear weapons as 'nuclear powers' - giving status to those who flout the world's collective security treaties such as the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the NPT is like a slap in the face to the law-abiding majority - over 180 countries - that have renounced nuclear weapons and testing," she added.

The nuclear-armed states - whether defined under the NPT or posturing outside the NPT like North Korea - are security problems for the world, she said.

And North Korea has demonstrated once again that nuclear weapons are what weak leaders think they need to divert attention from their failed economic and social policies at home, said Johnson, author of

“Unfinished Business”, the authoritative book on the CTBT published by the United Nations in 2009.

Asked if the test proves that North Korea, also known as the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), is ready to go nuclear, Philip Schell, researcher on the Nuclear Weapons Project, Arms Control and Non-proliferation Programme at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), told IPS that the latest test doesn’t prove that North Korea is on the verge of becoming a full-fledged nuclear power, comparable to the P5.

However, the series of three tests - although the first one is widely believed to have been a failure - certainly indicate progress in the DPRK’s nuclear weapons programme, he said.

At the same time, while it appears to be the DPRK’s goal is to develop a miniaturised nuclear warhead that could be fitted on a ballistic missile, there have been no signs so far that the DPRK has actually achieved “weaponisation” of the nuclear devices that were tested.

Whether the DPRK currently possesses the necessary long-range missile technology is also doubtful, he said. However, the successful launch of a multi-stage rocket suggests that it is gradually mastering such technology.

Schell also pointed out that the DPRK withdrew from the NPT (although some states don’t recognise its withdrawal). Furthermore, it did not sign or ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

However, the Security Council Resolutions 1718, 1874, and 2087 prohibit DPRK from conducting future nuclear tests or launches that involve ballistic missile technology. These resolutions, said Schell, are de facto legally binding. On the other hand, the DPRK sees these as discriminatory.

Asked about the DPRK argument that its nuclear tests are few and far between compared to all the nuclear tests conducted by the P5, Johnson told IPS this argument is “specious nonsense”.

“Do we absolve a murderer who argues that he only occasionally kills people, contrasting this with the mass murders carried out by serial killers and other criminals? Of course not.” She said that just as each act of murder is a crime, each nuclear test violates international treaties, laws and collectively agreed means for establishing global security.

“The fact that others sinned with impunity before the international community could establish the nuclear test ban treaty is no excuse now,” Johnson said. [IPS | February 12, 2013] ♦



North Korean Missiles | Credit: aniruddhafriend-samirsinh.com

AIMING AT GLOBAL DISARMAMENT BY 2030

BY RAMESH JAURA IN BERLIN

An eminent Buddhist leader Daisaku Ikeda is calling for an "expanded nuclear summit" in 2015 to solidify momentum toward a world free from nuclear weapons and become the launching point for a larger effort for global disarmament aiming toward the year 2030.

With this in view, he hopes that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and forward-looking governments will establish an action group to initiate before year's end the process of drafting a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) outlawing nuclear weapons, which are not only inhumane but also swallow some \$105 billion year after year.

"A key factor . . . will be the stance taken by those countries which have relied on the extended deterrence of nuclear-weapon states, the so-called nuclear umbrella," writes Ikeda, who heads Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Tokyo-based lay Buddhist organization spanning the globe.

SGI President Ikeda notes with great satisfaction that signatories to the statements so far, urging putting a halt to proliferation and calling for abolition of atomic weapons of mass destruction, "include not only countries belonging to Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZs) and neutral countries, but also Norway and Denmark, which are members of NATO and thus come under that organization's nuclear umbrella. And yet these two countries have not only signed these statements but have played a key role in their drafting."

On the other hand, Japan, which also relies on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, has refrained from signing some of the important statements, he adds and implores Tokyo to "join with other countries seeking the prohibition of nuclear weapons as inhumane and work for the earliest



realization of a world free from the threat of these weapons". In his 2013 Peace Proposal 'Compassion, Wisdom and Courage: Building a Global Society of Peace and Creative,' Ikeda explores "the prospects for constructing a global society of peace and creative coexistence looking toward the year 2030".

Originally inspired by second Soka Gakkai President Josei Toda's 1957 anti-nuclear weapons declaration, Ikeda publishes a peace proposal every year which casts a close look at the interrelation between core Buddhist concepts and the diverse challenges global society faces in the effort to realize peace and human security. He has also made proposals touching on issues such as education reform, the environment, the United Nations and nuclear abolition.

The 2013 Peace Proposal comes in run-up to two significant events this year: The Conference on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons organized by the Norwegian Foreign Ministry on March 4-5 in Oslo - to be preceded by a civil society forum for a global ban on nukes, and a high level meeting in September of the UN General Assembly on nuclear disarmament.

Ikeda's 2013 Peace Proposal states that the huge annual aggregate expenditure on nuclear weapons globally underlines "the enormity of the burden placed on societies simply by the continued possession of these weapons". It adds: "If these financial resources were redirected domestically to health, social welfare and education programs or to development aid for other countries, the positive impact on people's lives and dignity would be incalculable."

The backdrop to the latest peace proposal is that since the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation

of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), there has been a growing, if still nascent, movement to outlaw nuclear weapons based on the premise that they are inhumane.

The Final Document of the Review Conference notes a "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and reaffirms "the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law." □

This ground breaking statement was followed by a resolution by the Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in November 2011, strongly appealing to all states "to pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement."

Subsequently, at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference held in May 2012, sixteen countries led by Norway and Switzerland issued a joint statement on the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament, stating that "it is of great concern that, even after the end of the Cold War, the threat of nuclear annihilation remains part of the 21st century international security environment."

They stressed: "it is of utmost importance that these weapons never be used again, under any circumstances. . . . All States must intensify their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons." In October 2012, this statement, with minor revisions, was presented to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly by thirty-five member and observer states.

Ikeda refers to important new research on the effects of nuclear war on the environment announced in April 2012 in the report 'Nuclear Famine'. Issued by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), the study predicts that even a relatively small-scale nuclear exchange

could cause major climate change and that the impact on countries far-distant from the combatant nations would result in famine affecting more than a billion people. According to Ikeda, the SGI's efforts to grapple with the nuclear weapons issue are based on the recognition that the very existence of these weapons represents the ultimate negation of the dignity of life.

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

With this in view, the SGI President has tabled three concrete proposals: First, to make disarmament a key theme of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Specifically, he proposes that halving world military expenditures relative to 2010 levels and abolishing nuclear weapons and all other weapons judged inhumane under international law be included as targets for achievement by the year 2030. In the proposal I issued on the occasion of the Rio+20 Conference in June 2012, Ikeda urged that targets related to the green economy, renewable energy and disaster prevention and mitigation be included in the SDGs, and I believe that disarmament targets should also be taken into consideration.

The International Peace Bureau (IPB), the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) and other civil society organizations are currently advocating the global reduction of military spending, and the SGI supports this out of the awareness that disarmament is humanitarian action.

Second, to initiate the negotiation process for a Nuclear Weapons Convention, with the goal of agreement on an initial draft by 2015: "To this end, we must engage in active and multifaceted debate - cen-

tered on the inhumane nature of nuclear weapons - to broadly shape international public opinion," says Ikeda.

Third, to hold an expanded summit for a nuclear-weapon-free world: The G8 Summit in 2015, the seventieth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, would be an appropriate opportunity for such a summit, which should include the additional participation of representatives of the United Nations and non-G8 states in possession of nuclear weapons, as well as members of the five existing NWFZs - Antarctic Treaty, Latin American NWFZ (Tlatelolco Treaty), South Pacific NWFZ (Rarotonga Treaty), Southeast Asia NWFZ (Bangkok treaty), and African NWFZ (Pelindaba Treaty) - and those states which have taken a lead in calling for nuclear abolition, explains the SGI President.

"If possible, Germany and Japan, which are the scheduled G8 host countries for 2015 and 2016 respectively, should agree to reverse that order, enabling the convening of this meeting in Hiroshima or Nagasaki," adds Ikeda.

In past peace proposals, he urged that the 2015 NPT Review Conference be held in Hiroshima and Nagasaki as a vehicle for realizing a nuclear abolition summit. He still hopes that such a meeting can be held.

"Nevertheless, the logistical issues involved in bringing together the representatives of almost 190 countries may dictate that the meeting be held at the UN Headquarters in New York as is customary. In that event, the G8 Summit scheduled to be held several months after the NPT Review Conference would provide an excellent opportunity for an expanded group of world leaders to grapple with this critical issue." argues Ikeda.

In this regard, he feels encouraged by President Barack Obama's speech at Hankuk University in Seoul on March 26, 2012: "My administration's nuclear posture recognizes that the massive nuclear arsenal we inherited from the Cold War is poorly suited to today's threats, including nuclear terrorism. . . . But I believe the United States has a unique responsibility to act-- indeed, we have a moral obligation. I say this as President of the only nation ever to use nuclear weapons."

This, of course, restates the conviction he first expressed in his April 2009 Prague speech. President Obama then went on to say: "Most of all, I say it as a father, who wants my two young daughters to grow up in a world where everything they know and love can't be instantly wiped out."

Ikeda says: "These words express a yearning for the world as it should be, a yearning that cannot be subsumed even after all political elements and security requirements have been taken fully into consideration. It is the statement of a single human being rising above the differences of national interest or ideological stance. Such a way of thinking can help us 'untie' the Gordian knot that has too long bound together the ideas of national security and nuclear weapons possession."

He adds: "There is no place more conducive to considering the full significance of life in the nuclear age than Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This was seen when the G8 Summit of Lower House Speakers was convened in Hiroshima in 2008. The kind of expanded summit I am calling for would inherit that spirit and solidify momentum toward a world free from nuclear weapons. It would become the launching point for a larger effort for global disarmament aiming toward the year 2030." [IDN-InDepthNews - February 12, 2013] ◆

*Photo on page 27: SGI President drafting 2013 Peace Proposal | Credit: SGI*

## PREPARING TO FIGHT OFF DOOMSDAY

BY JACQUES COUVAS IN ISTANBUL

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has adopted a new strategy to involve citizens and politicians more actively to push for a global ban on nuclear weapons. The strategy was emphasised at an ICAN conference in Istanbul on January 26.

The new strategy by ICAN, a coalition of 286 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in 68 countries which jointly campaign against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and aim to ultimately have them banned, aims to do more to sensitise both public opinion and state authorities to the consequences of a nuclear detonation.

ICAN intends to go beyond rhetoric and propose, with the involvement of states sensitive to the issue, concrete measures to cope with a nuclear disaster event. It will be hosting an international civil society forum in Oslo on March 2-3 this year, which will be followed by an experts conference on military nuclear threats organised by the government of Norway with the support of 16 other nations.

“We are constantly told by nuclear weapons states officials that putting into effect the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is not possible, not conceivable in practical terms,” Arielle Denis, ICAN Europe, Middle East and Africa coordinator told IPS. “Our position is that there is record of international treaties which have led to the prohibition of other lethal weapons. If the international community succeeded in banning land mines and cluster bombs, it can certainly ban the ownership of nuclear arms.”

The coalition of NGOs argues that any country, even a nuclear weapons state, could be the target of a nuclear attack in the new geopolitical environment, which it says encourages the proliferation of rogue



states and terrorist organisations. “Although no nuclear weapons have been used since 1945, cyberterrorism makes today the explosion of an atomic warhead realistic,” said Denis.

Core to this strategy is the humanitarian aspect of a nuclear detonation, even of a single device. ICAN published a report in 2012 which identifies immediate and long-term damage to local populations.

Blast shockwaves travelling at hundreds of kilometres an hour, are lethal to all those in the proximity of ground zero of the detonation, who often just vaporise due to the intense pressure and heat. Further away, victims suffer from oxygen shortage and carbon monoxide excess, lung and ear damage, and internal bleeding.

But the consequences due to radiation are felt even at greater distances. This affects most organs of the body with effects lasting decades and with genetic alterations suffered by the victims and their descendants.

Such claims are corroborated by studies by the U.S. government and by research institutions between the 1970s and last decade. In a scenario of a nuclear attack involving three medium power warheads against an intercontinental ballistic missiles base in the “farm belt” of the U.S., which covers primarily the northern mid-west, it was calculated that the number of dead could reach 7.5 to 15 million, with 10 to 20 million being severely injured.

The humanitarian aspect of the surviving population would be practically impossible to manage, as the presence of radioactivity would force 40 million people to relocate as far away as possible. Relocation would take from several weeks to years, it was estimated. ☞

*Picture credit: ICAN*



The “farm belt” in the U.S. is a rural area. Europe is three times more densely populated than the U.S., and a nuclear detonation would have a more catastrophic humanitarian impact on European locations.

ICAN, formed in 2007, operates through an international steering group of personalities and experts on nuclear armaments and a small staff in Geneva, which coordinates international campaigns and events. Member NGOs provide support to regional activities.

ICAN’s main argument for its activism is based on the non-proliferation treaty (NPT), signed on July 1, 1968 in New York and gradually ratified by 189 states, excluding India, Pakistan and Israel. Its validity was extended indefinitely in May 1995.□

Signatories to the NPT are distinguished between the nuclear weapon states and the non-nuclear weapon states. The former group is composed of Britain, China, France, Russia, and the United States (U.S.), the same nations which form the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

Article VI of the NPT requires signatory states to pursue “negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament,” and towards a “treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.”

“Disarmament must be general and complete,” said Denis. “There was in the 1990s some ambiguity about the Treaty text in this respect, but this has been clarified in international law and all nuclear weapon states must begin negotiations for dismantling all their nuclear weapons.”

The U.S. has traditionally interpreted Article VI as having no mandatory effect on the parties. But the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in an advisory opinion, dated Jul. 8, 1996 stated 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 lack of visible willingness by nuclear weapon states to get around the negotiations table has fuelled the determination of the NGOs which form ICAN to systematically make citizens and politicians around the globe aware of the threats of maintaining an arsenal of nuclear weapons.

Although the number of nuclear warheads was drastically reduced after the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s from 60,000 to 19,000, ICAN is concerned about the continuing technology updates of such weapons by the nuclear weapon states.

Nuclear weapon spending in the U.S. reached 61.3 billion dollars in 2011, a ten percent increase over the previous year. The nine countries that are known, or suspected, to have nuclear military power increased in the same period their spending by 15 percent to 105 billion dollars. Israel has since 1958 adopted a non-confirmation, non-denial policy in respect to having a nuclear arsenal.

“This level of expenditure is a strong indication that nations which hold nuclear weapons have no intention to get rid of them any time soon,” said Denis. “The governments of such states say that they will dismantle their stocks as soon as the other nuclear weapon states do the same. It is a vicious, endless circle.” (IPS | February 1, 2013) ◆

## SANCTIONS DO NOT LEAD TO NUKE ABOLITION IN ASIA

BY KALINGA SENEVIRATNE IN SINGAPORE

North Korea's response to the United Nations Security Council's expanded sanctions on January 22 by threatening to resume nuclear tests and failure last November of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to persuade the five recalcitrant nuclear powers to sign the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone Treaty (SEANWFZ) have focused attention on the atomic threat facing the Asian region that is fast emerging as the centre of the global economy.



Posited very much in the midst of these developments is the Obama Administration's so-called US "pivot" or "re-balance" policy towards Asia, which is increasingly seen in the region as a security issue rather than an economic or political re-engagement.

Since this policy announcement two years ago there has been increased tension in the region with regard to China's territorial claims in the South China Sea that has prompted some analysts in Asia to question whether the US is trying to provoke Asian countries like Japan, the Philippines and Vietnam into confrontation with China.

With North Korea's recent posturing, the threat of a nuclear confrontation - though remote - is rather worrisome to Asia that is emerging from centuries of economic subjugation by the West.

A looming confrontation with China in Asia may be one of the major reasons why the three nuclear powered states Russia, France and Britain could not agree to sign the SEANWFZ as planned at the 21st ASEAN Summit in Cambodia in November 2012. France voiced its reservations on the right of self-defence, United Kingdom on "new threat and development", and Russia on the right of foreign ships and air-

craft to pass into the nuclear free zone, a concern similar to that of the US.

The notion of a SEANWFZ dates back to November 27, 1971, when the original five members of ASEAN signed a Declaration on a (ASEAN) Zone of Peace, Freedom, and Neutrality (ZOPFAN) in Kuala Lumpur. The first major component of the ZOPFAN pursued by ASEAN was the establishment of a SEANWFZ.

However, due to the unfavourable political environment in the region, the formal proposal for the establishment of such a zone was tabled only in the mid-1980s. After a decade of negotiating and drafting efforts by the ASEAN Working Group on a ZOPFAN, the SEANWFZ Treaty was signed by the heads of states of all 10 ASEAN member countries in Bangkok on December 15, 1995 and it took effect two years later. The negotiations between ASEAN and the five nuclear powers on the protocol have been under way since May 2001 with no progress achieved.

Among a number of rules and conditions laid out by the treaty, the main components are that signatory States are obliged not to develop, manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or have control over nuclear weapons; station nuclear weapons; or test or use nuclear weapons anywhere inside or outside the treaty zone.

The protocol also stipulates that Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) must abide by articles of the Treaty and not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against States parties. China has previously expressed its willingness to ratify the protocol, but the other four NWS cite the geographical scope of the Treaty as an obstacle. The treaty zone covers the territories, continental shelves, and exclusive economic zones (EEZ) of the States Parties within the zone. ➡

Malaysian political scientist, Dr Chandra Muzaffar, Executive Director of the International Movement for a Just World says that while ASEAN states must be commended for drafting and signing the SEANWFZ, at the same time “all the five nuclear weapons states are determined to ensure that their nuclear advantage is preserved at all costs, ‘self-defence’ is just a camouflage”.

“Britain and France are US allies and the US through various military and diplomatic moves is reinforcing its agenda of containing China. So it should not surprise anyone if its two European allies are seeking to bolster the US position in the region,” he said in an interview with IDN-InDepthNews.

### Non-governmental actors

Asked if the Asian countries should make US access to their markets conditional on the nuclear powers signing the treaty, Dr Muzaffar said: “ASEAN and other countries in Asia should first demonstrate a strong collective commitment towards the control and abolition of nuclear weapons before they make demands upon outside powers. Such a commitment does not exist at the moment. This is why I do not see them asking these powers to sign the Bangkok Treaty as a condition for access to the expanding markets in Asia.”

Dr Muzaffar is of the view that governments in the region will not be able to persuade the nuclear powers to sign the treaty and it will have to be non-governmental actors that need to mount a concerted campaign for it to happen. “In the ultimate analysis, it is only a powerful citizens’ movement that can rid the continent of present and future nuclear weapons”, he argues.

In a speech at the University of Iceland in October 2012, Dr Gareth Evans, the former Australian Foreign Minister and the Convener of the Asia Pacific Leadership Network on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (APLN), regretted that the spirit of optimism some three years ago that nuclear disarmament could be achieved in the Asia-Pacific region has evaporated.

“If the existing nuclear-armed states are serious about non-proliferation, as they all claim to be, and sincerely want to prevent others from joining their club, they cannot keep justifying the possession of nuclear weapons as a means of protection for themselves or their allies against other weapons of mass destruction, especially biological weapons, or conventional weapons,” he argued. “All the world hates a hypocrite, and in arms control as in life generally, demanding that others do as I say is not nearly as compelling as asking them to do as I do.”

Dr Evans also pointed out that nuclear weapons would not deter terrorists, as many nuclear weapons states tend to argue. “Terrorists don't usually have territory, industry, a population or a regular army which could be targeted with nuclear weapons,” he said.

On September 13, 2012, APLN expressed deep disappointment at the evaporation of political will evident in global and regional efforts toward nuclear disarmament over the previous year. The statement was signed by 25 political, diplomatic, military and scientific leaders from 14 Asia Pacific countries.

Professor Ramesh Thakur, Director of the Centre for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament at the Australian National University, writing in Japan Times noted that plans for upgrades, modernization or increased numbers and destructive power of nuclear arsenals by all the nuclear-armed states indicate that none is serious about nuclear disarmament.

“All countries that have and seek nuclear weapons, or are increasing the size and modernizing the quality of their arsenals, should be subjected to international opprobrium,” he wrote.

Rather than subjecting nukes to international scorn, several commentators in regional publications in recent months have argued that the US may need to be persuaded to re-deploy tactical weapons in the Korean peninsula, which the Bush administration withdrew in 1991 - in order to respond to the North Korean threat. ➡

“Tactical nukes on South Korean soil would enhance the credibility of the US nuclear umbrella against North Korea and also reassure the South Korean public of the US security commitment” argues Seong-whun Cheon, a Senior Research Fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification in a commentary published by GlobalAsia.

“As North Korea continues to develop long-range missiles, alliance dynamics in Northeast Asia will come to resemble that of Europe in the late 1950s.” he says.

“When the Soviet Union first fired its Sputnik missile and opened the intercontinental missile age, Western European allies began to worry that America might decouple its own security from alliance security in fear of a Soviet attack on the US mainland. Similar concerns on decoupling will become widespread in South Korea, and cause ripple effects in Japan. To allay looming concerns about such a possible decoupling, redeploying tactical nukes in South Korea is essential,” writes Cheon.

Yet, China may play a crucial role in decreasing tension in the region. Ties are expected to become warmer between China and South Korea under the new leaderships. The newly elected South Korean President Park Geun-Hye has already sent a special envoy to Beijing and China’s new Communist party chief Xi Jinping has called for a resumption of

the six-party talks on North Korea.

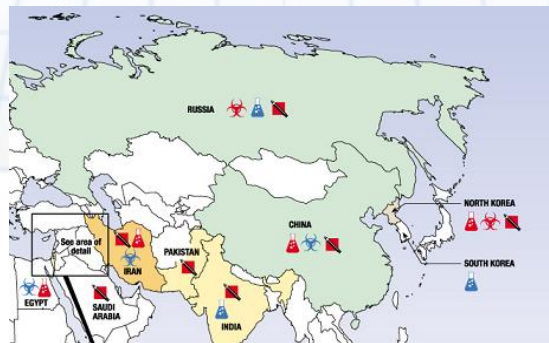
While Park has indicated that she would take a more conciliatory stance towards North Korea compared to her hawkish predecessor, China’s Jinping was reported by the Korean Times as saying that he opposes the development of nuclear weapons by North Korea.

Professor Shen Dingli, Director of the Centre for American Studies at the Fudan University in Shanghai says that if the US wants stability and peace in the Asia-Pacific region it should work with China to achieve.

“Rebalancing by ganging up on China will undermine stability in East Asia, and may ultimately backfire and cause damage to the US’ own interests,” he argues in a commentary published by China Daily. “So far the US has insisted on ignoring the facts, confusing right and wrong and taking sides in disputes that don’t directly concern it,” Dingli writes.

He urges the new Obama administration to recognize that “the power shift in the Asia-Pacific region is unstoppable, and the US can only go with the flow, respect the legitimate and reasonable demands of the emerging powers, and help seek a fair and proper settlement of major disputes in the region”. [IDN-InDepthNews - January 29, 2013] ♦

*Picture on page 32: Pyongyang Metro | Credit: Wikimedia Commons*



Credit: treehugg: er.com

## ALL UNCLEAR OVER NUCLEAR

BY RANJIT DEVRAJ IN NEW DELHI

When India was admitted to the world's nuclear power industry nearly five years ago, many believed that this country had found a way to quickly wean itself away from dependence on coal and other fossil fuels that power its economic growth.

After all, India already had a home-grown nuclear power industry that was producing about 4,000 megawatts of power from 19 nuclear reactors, defying a United States-led embargo on nuclear equipment imposed after it carried out a nuclear test in 1974.

India's refusal to sign the 189-nation Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was also a cause for its isolation. It took a special waiver in September 2008 by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) of 47 member countries to allow India to engage in nuclear commerce.

With the embargos lifted, India's planners envisaged a string of 'nuclear parks' built along the long peninsular coastline by foreign investors adding 40 gigawatts (Gw) of additional power by 2020.

What the planners overlooked was stiff opposition from farmers and fishers, fearful for their traditional way of life and livelihoods, the possibility of adverse seismic events, and a challenge to the nuclear energy plans in the Supreme Court by leading intellectuals.

"There was little doubt that the plan to build numerous nuclear plants all along the coast would run into problems," says M.V. Ramana, a scientist currently appointed with the Nuclear Futures Laboratory and with the Programme on Science and Global Security, both at the Princeton University in the U.S.

"Because of intensifying conflicts over natural resources, opposition to new nuclear sites will only get intensified in the future. Water



scarcity, for example, is becoming more severe by the year," Ramana told IPS in an email interview.

"Fisherfolk are already seeing their livelihoods threatened by a number of developments - industrial and power plant effluents being discharged into the sea is an important one," Ramana said.

Currently there are intense protests at Jaitapur in western Maharashtra state where a 9,900 MW nuclear park is being built by the French power developer Areva SA, and also at Koodankulam in southern Tamil Nadu state where a Russian nuclear power facility is nearing completion.

Ramana said displacement is a major issue. "The treatment meted out to those dispossessed by nuclear facilities already commissioned has been less than satisfactory."

What should nuclear planners do to address the growing domestic opposition to nuclear energy?

"To start with, the planners should realise that the country has a choice between their ambitious plans and democracy," says Ramana.

"The fact that we have seen intense and prolonged protests at Koodankulam and Jaitapur is a sign that all other options for registering their voice have been closed to the people."

A bigger issue looming up is the possibility of a Fukushima-style disaster, especially at Jaitapur, a site eminent geologists say is vulnerable to seismic activity. ➡

*Picture: Local people protest over the Koodankulam nuclear plant in India. Credit: K.S.Harikrishnan.*

Vinod Kumar Gaur, one of India's leading seismologists and a distinguished professor at the prestigious Indian Institute of Astrophysics in Bangalore, says site investigations around Jaitapur were seriously flawed.

According to Gaur, it is hugely significant that the Jaitapur site is only about 110 km from the Koyna dam which developed serious cracks after it was hit in 1967 by a quake that measured 6.4 on the Richter scale.

It is also significant, Gaur said, that in the year 1524 a major tsunami had hit the western coast 100 km north of Jaitapur. The possibility of a tsunami caused by offshore faulting or a distant earthquake was not discussed in existing studies.

Gaur told IPS that "confirmation or refutation through scientific investigations is critical to determining the seismic safety factor for the Jaitapur plant, and the recent earthquake in Japan has demonstrated that it is relevant to plan for all possibilities when it comes to designing nuclear power plants.

"Equally important," Gaur said, was for "the results of scientific investigations to be made public so as to allay the fears that people have."

Ramana said it was time that India's secretive Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) engaged in an honest and open debate over its nuclear plans with the country at large, in particular the people who live in the vicinity of proposed sites.

"DAE has to let go of scientifically indefensible positions like its claims that its reactors are '100 percent' safe and that the probability of a nuclear accident is one in infinity, i.e., zero. There is always a

non-zero, albeit small, possibility of a nuclear accident occurring at any reactor," Ramana said.

"Setting up a reactor will affect the environment because of the expulsion of radioactive contaminants and hot water. How significant is the impact can be the subject of debate, not its existence." He added that "if the locals absolutely refuse to have a nuclear plant in their midst, then the DAE should cancel construction plans."

The DAE has avoided holding public consultation called by the People's Movement Against Nuclear Energy (PMANE) that is leading the resistance in Koodankulam.

"Holding public debates has become even more important after Fukushima," S.P. Udayakumar, leader of PMANE since 1988, told IPS. "Fukushima has greatly helped our agitation and people understand the dangers better."

"Given that civil society has repeatedly called for public debate, the prime minister should step in and hold consultations across the country on the relevance and role of a dangerous and expensive energy option," said Karuna Raina, campaigner against nuclear energy for Greenpeace in India.

The biggest challenge yet to India's ambitious nuclear plans is a writ petition filed in India's Supreme Court in October 2011 by eminent citizens asking for the court's intervention to stay all nuclear construction until safety reviews and cost-benefit analyses are carried out.

In its appeal to the court the group said the nuclear programme goes against the "fundamental right to life" guaranteed by India's constitution. (IPS | January 25, 2013) ♦

## IRAN'S NUCLEAR PLANS DROP OFF ISRAELI RADAR

BY PIERRE KLOCHENDLER IN JERUSALEM

A meeting between Iran and world powers is tentatively set for the month-end in Istanbul, and might constitute a litmus test over a compromise regarding Iran's uranium enrichment programme. Strangely enough, in Israel, Iran's nuclear quest is now off the public radar.

The previous talks between Iran and the 'P5+1' (the five permanent UN Security Council members plus Germany) took place in June 2012 in Moscow.

Any compromise would have to evolve around Tehran's self-proclaimed right to enrich uranium and commitment not to produce higher-grade material; and access to closed nuclear facilities such as Fordow - in exchange for a gradual lifting of the regime of sanctions.

Meanwhile on January 14, the U.S. Institute for Science and International Security published an assessment that Iran would be able to produce material for at least one nuclear bomb by mid-2014.

And on January 16, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) held talks with Iranian officials regarding access to Parchin, a military base suspected to have concealed nuclear weapons-related tests, and to Iranian officials involved in Tehran's nuclear programme.

But in Israel, the issue barely figured in the campaign blitz ahead of the general elections on January 22.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu - "Bibi" as Israelis call him - is boasting about his uncompromising stance on Iran as his tenure's greatest achievement. At least from his perspective, his threat of war avoided war, and pressed the international community to press Iran.



Bibi's detractors call him a bluffer who never intended to attack Iran's nuclear facilities. But bluffs are legitimate electoral tactics.

The Bibi 'red line' show at the UN General Assembly annual gathering in September 2012 was his premiership's grand finale.

On the world's podium displaying a 'Looney Tunes' ticking bomb cartoon measuring Iran's level of enriched uranium, he warned that "by next spring or at most by next summer", Iran would have the capacity to produce an atomic-grade weapon.

Yet he refrained from committing himself to both his own red line and deadline. His standing skyrocketing back home, he called for early elections - and, for his re-election - thus timing a second term with the timeline - defined by him - of a potential showdown with Iran.

Earlier in January, announcing the campaign commercials' official kick-off, a one-hour profile of the incumbent leader was broadcast on Channel Two. Netanyahu mentioned Iran only once - quite obliquely in fact.

He laconically repelled biting accusations by former internal security chief Yuval Diskin who, in the Yedioth Aharonoth newspaper, depicted top-level consultations on Iran as "decadent", with supporting cigars, alcohol and gourmet cuisine. "I held the most serious meetings ever on Iran," Netanyahu retorted. ➡

*Picture: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on an election poster | Credit: Pierre Klochender/IPS*

### Full stop, exit Iran.

Ads showed Bibi re-enacting his UN speech - this time with a Middle East map - pronouncing with poise that, for now he has succeeded in preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

So, how come what's been branded by him as "the greatest existential threat" - not just to Israel but to the world - suddenly vanishes as if it never existed in the first place.

His electoral discourse on Islamist perils in Egypt and Syria heralds no fresh strategic vision for the future. But the easily aroused fear factor traditionally plays in favour of the Right.

Just name it - fear of "Palestinian terror"; angst, heightened by the "Arab Spring", of having to live in "a villa in the jungle".

But why spewing radioactive fallout and risk awakening a dispassionate campaign when the prevailing sentiment is that Netanyahu's reelection is a fait accompli.

He's known to duck when a diplomatic ball is thrown at him. Like Netanyahu One, Netanyahu Two is expected to procrastinate and defeat any risky peace initiative or hazardous military adventure. It's a comforting feeling for many Israelis.

Besides, no need to remind a million of them of the rocket attacks launched by Palestinian Islamist groups on their cities and villages last November, during Israel's onslaught on Hamas in Gaza.

His campaign focused on having buttressed Israel with defensive means such as the Iron Dome anti-missile system, the border wall with Egypt near completion, and the current reinforcement of the defence line on the occupied Syrian Golan Heights.

Therefore slogans and fake debates on core issues of peace and war - especially against Iran - serve no purpose whatsoever.

Still, Israeli election campaigns are often brewing with inflammatory declarations of intentions.

Hence, Netanyahu's immediate "punitive measure" against the upgrading of Palestine's UN status as a non-member observer state last November - the revival of plans for settlement expansion in the highly contested "E1" area of the occupied West Bank - is deemed provocative enough.

But to play with fire and threaten unilateral military action on Iran is simply not on the cards for the prudent Netanyahu. (IPS | January 18, 2013 | Updated by Ramesh Jaura | January 23, 2013) ◆





## ABANDONING NUKES - LESSONS FROM SOUTH AFRICA

BY JOHN FRASER IN JOHANNESBURG

Not many nice things can be said about the apartheid regime in South Africa. It was racist, violent in the brutal oppression of many of its own citizens, and was despised around the world.

However, in the dying days of apartheid, the South African authorities took a step that has had major implications for the country and for the African continent: it scrapped its nuclear weapons programme.



“The first stage involved the dismantling of South Africa’s six complete (and one partially assembled) nuclear devices,” reported Greg Mills, who heads the Johannesburg-based Brenthurst Foundation, a research body that acts as an advisor to African governments.

“A decision to this effect was taken by then President F.W. de Klerk in February 1990, shortly after the release of Nelson Mandela from prison and the unbanning of the African National Congress, the Pan Africanist Congress and the South African Communist Party.”

South Africa acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) on Jul. 10, 1991. Seven weeks later, on Sep. 16, the country signed a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), allowing for frequent IAEA inspections of its facilities.

“South African authorities co-operated fully with the IAEA during the whole verification process, and were commended by the then director-general of the Agency in 1992, Dr. Hans Blix, for providing inspectors with unlimited access and data beyond those required by the Safeguards Agreement,” added Mills.

“The second step involved the scrapping of South Africa’s ballistic missile programme, which commenced in 1992, and took around 18 months. This process culminated in its admission to the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) in September 1995, after the destruction of the last of its missile engines had been verified. The third stage involved the conclusion of SA’s biological and chemical warfare programme,” he said.

Mills concluded that South Africa “thus occupies a unique position in the world as being the first country to have voluntarily dismantled its nuclear weapons capability. The (South African) experience does point to the importance of creating the right environment in which regimes can be made to feel confident enough to disarm and stay that way.”

While South African apartheid leaders’ actions were certainly worthy of praise - for once - there is some suspicion surrounding their motives. Did they dismantle the country’s nuclear weapons because they believed in a vision of an Africa free of nuclear weapons? Or was their motive more cynical? Realising that black rule was inevitable, did they dismantle South Africa’s nuclear weapons to keep them out of the hands of Nelson Mandela and his looming ANC administration?

Mills’ colleague Terence McNamee, deputy-director of the Brenthurst Foundation, wrote in the Johannesburg Star newspaper that the country that dismantled nuclear weapons “was not (current President Jacob) Zuma’s South Africa, but another country, an international pariah, mercifully now extinct”. ☹

*Picture above: Smoke billowing out from a nuclear testing facility. | Credit: National Nuclear Security Administration/CC-BY-ND-2.0*

He added: "Zuma doubtless believes, like most of his senior colleagues who were active during the transition to democracy, that the people who built South Africa's nuclear arsenal - the apartheid regime - destroyed it because they didn't want the ANC to get their hands on it."

McNamee noted that de Klerk waited until March 1993 to tell the world of the dismantlement of South Africa's nuclear weapons, and until that time "no one, not even Nelson Mandela, had been informed that the programme had been abolished (let alone that it even existed)."

While nuclear weapons no longer have a place in South Africa, or on the African continent, there is a growing expectation that nuclear energy will be required to help provide a growing part of the energy mix on the Continent. "Nuclear power could help to answer the extraordinary energy backlog of African countries, where the continent produces about the levels of Spain, though with 20 times as many people," Mills told IPS. "But the concerns about the use of nuclear power in Africa go to the heart of the very reason why there is this backlog in the first instance: governance."

Branding expert Jeremy Sampson, executive chairman of the Johannesburg-based branding consultancy Interbrand Sampson, notes that in image terms the South African decision to scrap its nuclear weapons programme has boosted its moral authority on the issue of non-proliferation. "The last couple of decades have seen a dramatic rise in the importance of brand and reputational issues," he told IPS. "This no longer applies simply to companies, products and services, but today embraces people, even countries."

Questioning the real reason for scrapping South Africa's nuclear weapons programme, Sampson speculates that the regime may have received rewards for this decision, which have not yet come to light. "Did South Africa really develop a nuclear device, who helped them, was there a dummy run in the deep South Atlantic, and how would they have used it?" he wonders.

Sampson also suggests that South Africa's decision to voluntarily give up its nuclear option raises many questions. "Was the apartheid regime really desperate? Were sanctions biting? What was bartered, what guarantees were given, were slush funds really set up around the world for escaping members of the regime, as happened in Germany at the end of the Second World War? "Has any other country voluntarily given up its nuclear option, which would have taken years and billions to develop?" Sampson argues that whatever the rewards, they must have been "very, very significant. Military activity in Angola and the propping up of (Angolan rebel leader) Jonas Savimbi must have been high on the agenda."

Frans Cronje, deputy CEO of the South African Institute of Race Relations, another Johannesburg-based think tank, suggests that the apartheid regime came under strong pressure from the West, and possibly from Russia as well, to renounce its nuclear weapons programme. "The whole thing was dressed up as an honourable retreat from a nuclear Africa," he told IPS. "It is likely that Western countries and Russia as well had concerns about an independent African state having nuclear weapons."

He also believes South Africa would today be stronger on the international stage if it had retained a nuclear arsenal. "A nuclear African state would be taken more seriously and would have a stronger leadership role - it forces people to take you seriously," he said. "In leadership terms, renouncing nuclear weapons does the opposite - it reduces your influence in foreign affairs and international politics. "If renouncing nuclear weapons grows your influence, others would be falling over themselves to surrender their nuclear arsenals."

We may never know all the reasons why, but South Africa's scrapping of its nuclear weapons did win moral benefits that have endured today. It gave the country a voice globally on non-proliferation issues and the moral authority to develop its own nuclear electricity industry without attracting international suspicion, as has most recently been the case with Iran. (IPS | January 8, 2013) ♦

## FRESH IMPETUS EXPECTED FOR BANNING NUKE TESTS

BY JAMSHED BARUAH FROM VIENNA

The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, better known as CTBTO, expects fresh momentum in 2013 for the entry into force of a global treaty prohibiting nuclear tests, which herald the advent of new weapons of mass destruction.

This sanguine anticipation derives from the fact that in a near unanimous vote at the UN General Assembly on December 3, 2012, the vast majority of countries listed their support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) - which, according to Rebecca Johnson of Acronym Institute, "remains a key piece of unfinished business of the nuclear age".

The CTBT resolution was adopted by 184 votes in favour, representing an all-time high, one against (North Korea) and three abstentions (India, Mauritius, Syria). The resolution "urges all States that have not yet signed the Treaty, in particular those whose ratification is needed for its entry into force, to sign and ratify it as soon as possible."

These States are the remaining eight of 44 in possession of nuclear technology that have yet to formally embrace the CTBT: China, North Korea, Egypt, India, Israel, Iran, Pakistan and the United States.

The voting results showed an increase in support with a record number of countries voting in favour of the CTBT. Previous year's resolution on the CTBT was adopted with 174 countries voting in favour, with the same number of votes against and abstentions as in 2012. Despite not having signed the Treaty yet, Pakistan voted in favour of the resolution.



The UN General Assembly also approved a resolution on the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The Japanese draft includes a paragraph that "urges all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty at the earliest opportunity". The paragraph was approved by 165 countries voting in favour and only North Korea voting against. The overall resolution was adopted with a margin of 174-1-13.

The resolutions of the General Assembly are not legally binding, but are important recommendations that show the political stance of UN Member States on the issues concerned.

There were three further resolutions stressing the importance of the CTBT on: Nuclear Disarmament, Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World, and the Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons.

The General Assembly meeting came two months after the Ministerial Meeting on the CTBT, which issued a joint statement stressing the importance of the CTBT as a "vital step" towards nuclear disarmament. United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told the States that have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT: "You are failing to live up to your responsibility as a member of the international community."

Though eight of 44 nuclear capable States have yet to embrace the Treaty, since CTBT opened for signature in 1996, 95% of the world's countries have subscribed to the norm that bans all nuclear explosions. ➡

*Picture: UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (centre) at the Operations Centre of the CTBTO's International Data Centre with CTBTO Executive Secretary Tibor Tóth (right) and CTBTO's IDC Director Lassina Zerbo. Credit: CTBTO*

According to the Vienna-based CTBTO, which observed its fifteenth anniversary in February 2012, nuclear testing has virtually ground to a halt. The Treaty's unprecedented verification regime - a "system of systems", comprising a \$1 billion investment - is nearing completion and already ensures that no nuclear explosion escapes detection.

**Technical backing:** CTBTO takes pride in the fact that with the help of member states, it was able to complete the installation of nine more monitoring facilities, meaning that the International Monitoring System is now over 85% complete. Installation has also started for seven new facilities. In the United States, the National Research Council issued a positive technical and scientific assessment of the verification regime's detection capabilities in March 2012.

**Financial assistance:** CTBTO also points out that the payment of regular contributions by 183 member states was higher than in the previous year - despite the difficult prevailing global economic situation. In addition, according to the CTBTO, the European Union has made a new voluntary contribution of over € 5 million (nearly US\$ 7 million) which will be used to further upgrade the organization's monitoring capabilities to detect nuclear explosions and to assist developing countries to take a more active part in this joint effort.

"A contribution of this magnitude, especially in times of austerity budgets, is testimony to the EU's unwavering support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the CTBTO," the organization's Executive Secretary Tibor Tóth said.

Also a voluntary contribution by Japan of around US\$ 737,000 will enable the organization to track airborne radioactivity with greater precision," the CTBTO says. The CTBTO is looking forward to three key events between June and September 2013:

The Science and Technology 2013 Conference (SnT2013) will be held from June 17 to 21 at the Hofburg imperial palace in Vienna. This sci-

entific conference will provide a platform for hundreds of scientists to discuss further enhancements of the CTBT's verification regime.

On August 1, Lassina Zerbo, who has been elected by member states as the organization's next Executive Secretary, will assume office, taking over from Executive Secretary Tibor Tóth, whose term ends on July 31. Zerbo is currently the Director of the CTBTO's International Data Centre Division.

During the UN Ministerial week in September, Member States will gather for the next Article XIV Conference to generate new momentum for the entry into force of the CTBT. The previous (fifth) Conference to promote the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty concluded on September 18, 2007 with urgent calls to hold-out States to sign and ratify the Treaty. Representatives of 106 States, including two non-signatory States, participated in the two-day Conference.

Throughout the year 2013, the CTBTO will press ahead with preparations for the next major on-site inspection exercise. The next so-called Integrated Field Exercise will take place in Jordan in 2014, three years after the previous such inspection.

On-site inspections are conducted to verify States Parties' compliance with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. An on-site inspection is launched to establish whether or not a nuclear explosion has been carried out. During such an inspection, facts might also be gathered to identify a possible violator of the Treaty. It thus constitutes the final verification measure under the CTBT.

In this context, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's remarks at the CTBTO anniversary are considered reassuring: "As a diplomat, I devoted a great deal of energy to disarmament and non-proliferation, including through the CTBT. As Secretary-General, I am even more committed to this cause - and to realizing our vision of a world free of nuclear weapons." [IDN-InDepthNews - January 02, 2013] ◆

## RATE OF U.S., RUSSIAN NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT 'SLOWING'

BY CAREY L. BIRON IN WASHINGTON

Although the United States and Russia have massively reduced their collective number of nuclear weapons since the heyday of the Cold War, the rate of that reduction is slowing, the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) warned on December 17.

Further, these two countries alone continue to account for more than 90 percent of the world's total nuclear arsenal, 15 times the rest of the seven nuclear weapon states combined.

“The pace of reducing nuclear forces appears to be slowing compared with the past two decades,” Hans M. Kristensen, director of the FAS Nuclear Information Project, said.

“Both the United States and Russia appear to be more cautious about reducing further, placing more emphasis on ‘hedging’ and reconstitution of reduced nuclear forces, and both are investing enormous sums of money in modernising their nuclear forces over the next decade.”

Since 1991, the United States has reduced its number of nuclear weapons from around 19,000 to roughly 4,650 today, according to data in a new FAS report, authored by Kristensen, looking at the next decade of nuclear disarmament. Although the corresponding Russian numbers are not publicly known, FAS estimates that the decline has been even more significant, from around 30,000 to 4,500 today. (Though between the two countries, another 16,000 are awaiting dismantlement.)



Those are nearly fivefold decreases, echoed by reductions in non-strategic (or short-range) nuclear weapons by both Washington and Moscow of some 85 and 93 percent, respectively.

Such numbers represent a major success in international negotiation and engagement, but the FAS analysts suggest that tracking this trend in the long term is “becoming less interesting and relevant”.

Although a new bilateral treaty - the New Strategic Arms Reduction (START) Treaty - entered into force between the U.S. and Russia in 2011, it now appears that by the time of the agreement's 2018 deadline, the number of strategic nuclear weapons deployed by the two countries will be only “marginally smaller” than today. Further, the new treaty is set to sunset just three years later.

Given the new data, the implication is that either a new set of arms-reduction treaties will need to be agreed in coming years, or each country will need to embark on new unilateral programmes of reduction. If neither of those takes place, “large nuclear forces could be retained far into the future.”

With the election over, Kristensen is calling on President Barack Obama to “once again make nuclear arms control a prominent and visible part of his foreign policy agenda”. He also suggests that, with the U.S. debt and government spending currently front and centre in a rancorous debate, now might be a good time to gain traction on unilateral reductions of the U.S.'s own arsenal. ☞

According to the Ploughshares Fund, a peace and security-focused foundation in Washington that supported the FAS report, the United States looks set to spend around 640 billion dollars on its nuclear weapons programmes over the coming decade.

President Obama began his first presidential term by almost immediately giving a forceful speech, in April 2009 in Prague, in which he noted that the continued presence of nuclear weapons “matters to all people, everywhere”.

The president, who had taken over office only months before, also admitted that the United States has a unique responsibility in this regard. “As the only nuclear power to have used a nuclear weapon, the United States has a moral responsibility to act ... So today, I state clearly and with conviction America’s commitment to seek the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons.”

The subsequent four years have seen some limited legislative movement on the issue in Washington, with the most significant being the ratification of the New START Treaty. Yet Kristensen and others have characterised even this as “modest”, while Washington has continued to fail to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

However, following the recent presidential election here, President Obama has made initial suggestions that he remains deeply interested in undertaking a major new disarmament push. In early December, in his first major address on foreign policy since the election, the president noted that, despite past nuclear-reduction successes, the United States was “nowhere near done - not by a long shot.”

He also stated: “Russia has said that our current agreement hasn’t kept pace with the changing relationship between our countries. To which we say, let’s update it.” Those remarks are “an important signal to his national security team, the Congress, the American public, and the world that (Obama) intends to complete unfinished nuclear risk reduction tasks,” Daryl G. Kimball, executive director of the Arms

Control Association, a Washington watchdog, said in analysis e-mailed to IPS.

“By taking ... bold steps, President Obama could significantly reduce global nuclear dangers, reinforce the beleaguered nuclear non-proliferation system, and establish a lasting international nuclear security legacy.”

Recent weeks have seen mounting calls here in Washington for President Obama to build on this stance, both to push for new agreements with Russia and to take unilateral moves with regard to the United States’ own nuclear arsenal. Yet prospects look daunting on both fronts.

According to a recent policy brief from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington-based think tank, the U.S. arms-control agenda is currently “a more partisan issue than at any time since the end of the Cold War.” The brief’s editor, James M. Acton, says that this is in part due to Republican disagreement with President Obama’s central goal, that of a world without nuclear weapons.

Further, U.S.-Russian relations have become increasingly strained in recent months, including over U.S. plans for a missile defence system in Europe, despite a high-profile attempt by President Obama to “reset” Washington’s Russia policy. A major new move by the U.S. Congress to normalise trade relations with Russia - for the first time in nearly four decades - has now been overshadowed by simultaneous punitive legislation that censures Moscow for its human rights record. The Russian government’s response has been incendiary, promising retaliation and noting that the law “will rather negatively affect the prospects for bilateral cooperation”. (IPS | December 17, 2012) ◆

*Picture on page 43: The MGM-5 Corporal missile. Since 1991, the United States has reduced its number of nuclear weapons from around 19,000 to roughly 4,650 today Credit: White Sands Missile Range Museum/U.S. Army*

## THE FRIGHTENING SCENARIO OF THE NUCLEAR WAR

VIEWPOINT BY IRA HELFAND\* IN NORTHAMPTON

Soon after President Barack Obama was elected in 2008, hundreds of leaders of the global medical community wrote an open letter to him, and to newly elected Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, urging them to make the abolition of nuclear weapons their highest priority:

“You face many urgent crises at this difficult moment, but they all pale in comparison to the need to prevent nuclear war. A thousand years from now no one will remember most of what you will do over the next few years; but no one will ever forget the leaders who abolished the threat of nuclear war...Please do not fail us.”

Unfortunately, as we feared, the demands of the economic crisis crowded out other issues and, so far, the leaders of Russia and the United States have failed us. The re-election of Obama offers him a new chance to move the world down the path to nuclear disarmament. It is an opportunity that must not be wasted.

Since 2008, we have gained a fuller understanding of the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. For decades we have known that a large-scale war between the U.S. and Russia would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences for the whole world.

We now understand that even a much more “limited”, regional nuclear war, as might take place in South Asia, would also pose a threat to all of humanity. Studies by Alan Robock, Owen Brian Toon, and their colleagues have looked at a scenario in which India and Pakistan each use 50 Hiroshima sized bombs - only 0.4 percent of the world’s nuclear arsenal of more than 25,000 warheads against urban targets in the



other country. The consequences would be beyond our comprehension.

The explosions, firestorms and radiation would kill 20 million people over the first week. But the worldwide consequences would be even more catastrophic. The firestorms would loft five million tonnes of soot into the upper atmosphere, blocking out sunlight and reducing temperatures around the world by an average of 1.3 degrees Celsius for an entire decade. This sudden drop in temperature, and the resulting decline in precipitation and shortening of the growing season, would cut food production in areas far removed from South Asia.

According to a study by Mutlu Ozdogan, U.S. corn production would fall an average of 12 percent for an entire decade. A study by Lili Xia has shown that Chinese middle season rice would decline 15 percent over a full decade. Recent preliminary studies have shown even larger shortfalls for other grains.

The world is not prepared to deal with a decline in food production of this magnitude. World grain reserves currently equal less than three months’ consumption and would provide an inadequate buffer against these shortfalls. Further, according to the most recent data from the United Nations, there are currently more than 870 million people in the world who are malnourished.

An additional 300 million people receive adequate nutrition today but live in countries that import much of their food. All of these people, more than one billion in all, would be at risk of starvation in the aftermath of this “limited” war.

*\*Ira Helfand is co-president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize.*

A large-scale war between the U.S. and Russia would be even more catastrophic. Hundreds of millions of people would be killed directly; the indirect climate effects would be even greater. Global temperatures would drop an average of eight degrees Celsius, and more than 20 degrees Celsius in the interior of North America and Eurasia. In the Northern Hemisphere, there would be three years without a single day free of frost. Food production would stop and the vast majority of the human race would starve.

Since the end of the Cold War we have acted as though this kind of war simply can't happen. But it can: the two nuclear superpowers still have nearly 20,000 nuclear warheads; more than two thousand of them are maintained on missiles that can be fired in less than 15 minutes, destroying the cities of the other power 30 minutes later.

As long as the U.S. and Russia maintain these vast arsenals there remains the very real danger that they will be used, either intentionally or by accident. We know of at least five occasions since 1979 when one or the other of the superpowers prepared to launch a nuclear attack on the other country in the mistaken belief that they them-



selves were under attack. The most recent of these events was in January 1995. The conditions that existed then, which brought us within minutes of a nuclear war, have not significantly changed today. The next time an accident takes place, we may not be so lucky.

Recognising this great danger, 35 nations joined in a new call for the elimination of all nuclear weapons at the United Nations this October. The International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement has also called for the abolition of nuclear weapons. In March 2013, the Norwegian government will convene a meeting of all state parties to the Non Proliferation Treaty to discuss the humanitarian consequences of nuclear war.

The U.S. and Russia should embrace these initiatives and lead the way in negotiating a verifiable, enforceable treaty that eliminates nuclear weapons. These negotiations will not be easy, but the alternative is unthinkable. We cannot count on good luck as the basis of global security policy. If we do not abolish these weapons, someday our luck will run out, they will be used, and everything that we cherish will be destroyed. The stakes could not be higher. (IPS | December 18, 2012)



*Image above: The International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement*

*Credit: en.wikipedia.org*



## CHANGING THE GAME TO ACHIEVE NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

VIEWPOINT BY REBECCA JOHNSON\* IN LONDON

Twenty-five years ago, on Dec. 8, presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. This historic agreement eliminated a modern class of land-based “theatre” weapons - the SS20s, cruise and Pershing missiles - that had been brought into Europe in the early 1980s.

The breakthrough surprised most mainstream military and political analysts, but was hailed by European peace activists whose efforts to achieve this outcome had been derided by experts right up to the Reykjavik Summit between Reagan and Gorbachev in October 1986.

Gorbachev, however, has paid tribute to the role of civil society. Asked a few years ago what made him “trust” Reagan, the former Soviet leader said that he didn’t trust Reagan at all; he took the risk to go to Reykjavik and propose nuclear disarmament because he trusted the European peace movement and Greenham Common women to make sure that the U.S. would not take unfair advantage if he took the first step.

Gorbachev also spoke about being moved to act after reading about studies by Russian and American scientists that showed how life on Earth could be obliterated by the “nuclear winter” aftermath of a nuclear war.

Such a thorough understanding of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has been missing from mainstream debates since



then. Groupthink among government officials, arms controllers, funders and security experts have served to perpetuate the realpolitik notion that nuclear disarmament is an extraordinarily difficult military-technical process that only the nuclear-armed states can take forward.

Such an attitude has given increased power to the nuclear states, forcing nuclear-free countries into the supplicant role of calling for disarmament while simultaneously being marginalised as cheerleaders on the sidelines of the real game.

The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) - the jewel in the crown of cold war arms control - has long been in trouble, but its adherents keep hoping that enough band-aids can be applied to keep the NPT regime and review process going. Squandering the opportunities created by the end of the cold war, diplomatic gesture politics have failed to address the major nuclear threats in the real world, while the NPT paradoxically reinforces a prominent role for nuclear weapons in the security policies of a handful of governments.

It came as little surprise, therefore, to hear from the U.S. Department of State on Nov. 23 that the much heralded conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) “cannot be convened because of present conditions in the Middle East and the fact that states in the region have not reached agreement on acceptable conditions for a conference”. ☹

*\*Rebecca Johnson is executive director and co-founder of the Acronym Institute and vice chair of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).*

*Picture: U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev signing the INF Treaty in the East Room at the White House in 1987. Credit: Wikimedia Commons*

Iran, which only agreed to participate in the conference a few weeks earlier, predictably seized the high ground and castigated the U.S. for holding the conference - that had been mandated by the 2010 NPT Review Conference - hostage “for the sake of Israel”.

Nabil Elaraby, the Arab League’s secretary-general, warned that failure to convene the conference “would negatively impact on the regional security system and the international system to prevent nuclear proliferation”.

As Israel bombs Palestinians in Gaza, Israelis are being frightened and hurt by missiles on buses that are being fired in retaliation. Nuclear weapons bring no security, but their deployment in volatile regions like the Middle East, South Asia, North-East Asia and also Europe distract from genuine security requirements and add a massive additional threat to peace.

The nuclear possessors make the situation worse by talking about preventing nuclear terrorism while hiding behind the voodoo of nuclear deterrence - as if by wearing the weapons they can avoid having to worry about anyone using them.

Recent initiatives by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), the Red Cross and a growing number of governments have begun to arouse global interest in the humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons.

On Nov. 22, Norway’s Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide invited all United Nations governments to send senior officials and experts to participate in an international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons on March 4-5, 2013, in Oslo.

The aim of the conference is “to provide an arena for a fact-based discussion of the humanitarian and developmental consequences asso-



ciated with a nuclear weapon detonation. All interested states, as well as U.N. organisations, representatives of civil society and other relevant stakeholders are invited to the conference.”

This conference aims to bring together not only scientists and doctors to talk about the immediate blast, flash-burns, fires and radiation that would incinerate and contaminate millions, but also agencies that deal with refugees, food insecurity and the medical needs of millions of homeless, starving people, all of which will be compounded by predicted longer term effects such as nuclear winter and global famine that the detonation of less than one percent of today’s nuclear arsenals would cause.

Leaders have to think in humanitarian and environmental terms, as Gorbachev did.

The nuclear free countries have to stop behaving like passive supplicants, giving veto powers to their nuclear-armed neighbours. Unlike traditional arms control, humanitarian disarmament approaches recognise that everyone has the right and responsibility to take steps to prevent the use of nuclear weapons.

The best way to do this is to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons. Once the nuclear-free countries acknowledge their own power and responsibility, they will find that a nuclear ban treaty can be far quicker and simpler to achieve than they thought.

By changing the legal context, such a treaty would be a game changer, draining power and status from the nuclear-armed governments and hastening their understanding of their own security interests, increasing the imperative for concerted nuclear disarmament rather than perpetual proliferation. [IPS | December 12, 2012] ◆

*Picture above: Dr Rebecca Johnson*

## OPPORTUNITY MISSED FOR NUCLEAR-FREE MIDDLE EAST

BY JILLIAN KESTLER-D'AMOURS IN JERUSALEM

After the cancellation of an international conference to create a nuclear-free Middle East, leading experts have warned that an important opportunity to create stability in the region has been squandered.

“The 2012 meeting in Helsinki was a precedent. For the first time, the important decision (was taken) of convening a special meeting to study the requirements of a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East,” Ayman Khalil, director of the Amman-based Arab Institute for Security Studies told IPS.

“That in and of itself was an important decision and a milestone. Sadly, this didn’t materialise.”

Sponsored by the United Nations and backed by Russia, the United States and the United Kingdom, the conference on building a nuclear-free Middle East was set to take place in December in Finland.

United States State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland stated that the conference was cancelled due to “a deep conceptual gap (that) persists in the region on approaches towards regional security and arms control arrangements,” and because “states in the region have not reached agreement on acceptable conditions” for the meeting.

The meeting is now expected to be held in early 2013. According to the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs (ECFA), holding the conference was especially important at this time given “Iran’s non-response to the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency on one



hand, and Israel’s threat to launch a military attack on Iran on the other hand.”

The ECFA stated that the Arab Forum for Non-Proliferation would hold a meeting Dec. 12 in Cairo to discuss how to get the process re-started.

“Making the Middle East free of mass destruction weapons will create the appropriate environment for regional stability and security in the region,” it stated.

The decision to hold a special conference on the creation of a nuclear-free Middle East was made during a 2010 review meeting of states that are party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Signed into force in 1970, the NPT aims to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons technology, and further the goal of nuclear disarmament around the world. Currently, 190 parties have signed the treaty, including the five official nuclear-weapons states: China, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and the United States.

There are currently five nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world, according to the UN: Latin America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, South-East Asia, Central Asia, and Africa.

Israel, which has long been believed to possess nuclear weapons yet maintains a policy of “nuclear ambiguity”, has not signed the NPT. Many have said that the decision to cancel the Helsinki conference may be linked to Israeli fears that it would be singled out for criticism. ↻

*Picture: U.S. State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland | Credit: Wikimedia Commons*



According to Paul Hirschson, deputy spokesman for the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israel was never formally invited to the Helsinki conference, and therefore never agreed or disagreed to participate.

“I think that we probably agree with the Americans that the conditions aren’t right...I don’t think we’ve really got much to talk about anything,” Hirschson told IPS. “The subject’s a

nice subject, but what we’re really interested in is peace with the Palestinians, diplomatic relations with the Saudis; we’ve got a hundred things ahead of us before we start devoting time to that.”

Over the past year, Israel has publicly voiced its opposition to Iran working to acquire nuclear weapons, a charge that Iranian officials

have denied. Israeli leaders have gone so far as to suggest that they might pre-emptively strike Iranian nuclear facilities, causing diplomatic tensions with its largest ally, the United States.

According to Ayman Khalil, however, Israel’s nuclear ambiguity remains the “elephant in the room”, and it, not a nuclear Iran, constitutes the biggest obstacle to building a nuclear-free Middle East.

“All countries in the region have basically signed the (nuclear) non-proliferation treaty, including Iran. One country, and one country alone, remains outside of these arrangements, and that is Israel,” Khalil said.

“Arabs wanted this meeting (in Helsinki) to take place in good faith to reach an acceptable arrangement with Israel. If this meeting would have taken place as planned, it would have been a massive confidence building measure between members of the region.”

[IPS | December 2, 2012] ◆

Background note: The Middle East nuclear weapon free zone (MENWFZ) is a proposed agreement similar to other Nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions. Steps towards the establishment of such a zone began in the 1960s led to a joint declaration by Egypt and Iran in 1974 which resulted in a General Assembly resolution (broadened in 1990 to cover weapons of mass destruction).

Such a zone would strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, would help to promote global nuclear disarmament and would also help the Middle East peace process as substantial confidence-building measures.

Israel is the only Mideast country believed to have a nuclear arsenal, which was developed in the 1960s. Israel has been unwilling to discuss nuclear demilitarization except in the context of a comprehensive peace settlement including Palestinian issues and all of Israel’s neighbors, such as Syria and Iran.[citation needed] Israel maintains a veil of “studied ambiguity” (“amimut”), which Avner Cohen calls “opacity,” about its nuclear arsenal, and has not signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In December 2012, the United Nations General Assembly voted 176-6 in favor of a non-binding resolution calling on Israel to place its nuclear program under IAEA safeguards and and join the NPT. Israel responded that the UN body “has lost all its credibility regarding Israel with these types of routine votes that are ensured passage by an automatic majority and which single out Israel.”

Four countries in the Middle East have been found in non-compliance with their IAEA safeguards obligations under the NPT: Iraq, Libya, Iran, and Syria. Of these cases, Iran and Syria remain unresolved.

Finland agreed to host the 2012 conference to start talks on proposed Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. However, the conference did not take place. - Source Wikipedia

## STABLE NUKE ZERO IS FEASIBLE

BY RAMESH JAURA FROM VIENNA

Before World War II broke out in 1939, German-born Nobel laureate Albert Einstein recommended President Franklin D. Roosevelt to begin research on a nuclear weapon since Germany under Adolf Hitler might be developing such a destructive tool. The result was the Manhattan Project, which culminated in the U.S. dropping atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Einstein deplored use of the new discovery of nuclear fission as a weapon, and signed with the British philosopher Bertrand Russell, the Russell-Einstein Manifesto, highlighting the danger of nukes.

That was back in July 1955. Since then, major atomic powers have looked at nuclear deterrence as guarantor of enduring world peace and security. It was not before April 2009 - a few months before being announced the winner of Nobel Peace Prize - that President Barack Obama in his historic speech in Prague called for “a world without nuclear weapons”.

But in the fall of 2009, another Nobel laureate, Thomas Schelling, vehemently questioned the desirability of a world without nuclear weapons. In an essay - titled ‘A world without nuclear weapons?’ - in *Dædalus*, founded in 1955 as the *Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Schelling challenged the wisdom of going to “zero” and asked what would happen in the event of another war.

Schelling’s essay would appear to have stimulated the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP) to organise an international seminar and a panel discussion on November 19 and 20 to find answers to the question ‘Stable Zero: Feasible, Realistic?’ that is crucial for the survival of Planet Earth and humankind.



The event was organised in cooperation with the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) - Norway’s leading independent centre for research and information on international political and economic issues as well as on areas of central relevance to Norwegian foreign policy - and the Toda Institute for Global Peace and Policy Research, named after Josei Toda (1900-1958).

Toda was a Japanese educator and philosopher who was imprisoned together with his mentor Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871-1944) for upholding the belief in the dignity of life despite persecution by the Japanese military government during World War II. Makiguchi died in prison but Toda was able to survive the ordeal, devoting the rest of his life to the development of a grassroots peace movement in post-war Japan.

The Institute was established in 1996 by Toda’s main disciple Daisaku Ikeda, the President of the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a worldwide movement for peace, culture and education based on Buddhist Humanism.

Describing the purpose of the seminar, VCDNP, which is backed by the Austrian Foreign Ministry and James Martin Center of Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) at the Monterey Institute of International Studies as its partner, said: One might hope that major war would not happen in a world without nuclear weapons, but it always did, and Schelling worries that the necessary scenario analyses to find the strengths and weaknesses of proposals for a nuclear weapon-free world have not been done. ↻

*Image: U.S. Trident II (D-5) missile underwater launch | Credit: Wikimedia Commons*

“Considering how much intellectual effort in the past half-century went into the study of the ‘stability’ of a nuclear deterrence world, it ought to be worthwhile to examine contingencies in a nuclear-free world to verify that it is superior to a world with (some) nuclear weapons,” VCDNP said quoting Schelling. It added: This taps into the question of the meaning of “zero” - reconstitution capabilities; going more or less below “zero” - and in this respect a variety of views have been expressed. Schelling, on his part, emphasizes that a world without any reconstitution capability is illusory.

Panelists included besides Schelling, a distinguished University Professor Emeritus in the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland, who was awarded the 2005 Nobel Prize in Economics; former Swedish Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, Chairman Emeritus of Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) and a board member of Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI); Sverre Lodgaard, Senior Research Fellow of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs; and Andreas Persbo, Executive Director of the London-based Verification Research, Training and Information Centre (VERTIC).

### ‘A nervous world’?

Schelling’s argue: “A world without nuclear weapons would be a world in which the United States, Russia, Israel, China, and half a dozen or a dozen other countries would have hair-trigger mobilization plans to rebuild nuclear weapons and mobilize or commandeer delivery systems, and would have prepared targets to preempt other nations’ nuclear facilities, all in a high-alert status, with practice drills and secure emergency communications. Every crisis would be a nuclear crisis, any war could become a nuclear war. The urge to preempt would dominate; whoever gets the first few weapons will coerce or preempt. It would be a nervous world.”

Such arguments do not detract Ekeus or Lodgaard from pleading the cause of a world without nuclear weapons - a world that would usher in only if the five permanent members of the UN Security Council do not insist on their “divine right” to develop, produce and stockpile

nuclear weapons, while denying half a dozen or a dozen other countries such a right in the name of non-proliferation.

The Federation of American Scientists estimates there are more than 19,000 nuclear warheads in the world as of 2012, with around 4,400 of them kept in “operational” status, ready for use. There is no denying the fact, therefore, that transforming today’s heavily nuke-armed world into a world without nuclear weapons is not an easy task.

And this particularly against the backdrop, as VERTIC’s Executive Director Persbo, points out: “. . . we do not really know what conditions will enable a world free of nuclear weapons. Will it, as some argue, require a fundamental transformation of world affairs? Do we, as others say, need to live in a world with considerably reduced international tension, and a massive reduction in conventional arms, before we can consider giving up nuclear explosives?”

Persbo adds: “We do not have any good answers to these questions. As we do not, almost every answers assumes almost equal weight. The arguments becomes articles of faith, not carried by empirical evidence. You either believe in deterrence, that nuclear weapons preserved world peace, or you do not. Neither advocate can disprove the other.”

### Safeguards

With this in view, Persbo rightly stresses the role of safeguards in the future. “Safeguards, as administered by the International Atomic Energy Agency, will become increasingly important in a nuclear weapon free world. Fissile material will need to be accounted for, and the absence of undeclared stockpiles of these materials would need to be confirmed.”

He explains: “I think that verification in a nuclear weapon-free world will look very similar to safeguards in non-nuclear weapon states, but on a much larger scale. The fuel cycles of the two largest nuclear weapon states, the United States and Russia, are fundamentally

different, and much larger, than cycles found elsewhere. It will be challenging to take them on, and to bring them under full-scope safeguards. There are some large uncertainties in the stockpile numbers, and it may take decades, many decades, before anything resembling a completeness determination can be drawn.”

But Persbo thinks that these challenges can be overcome. “Putting some political capital into the negotiation of an FMCT will be a good start. Empowering the IAEA secretariat to be able to address some of the technical tasks that await them is a step that can be taken today. The IAEA already has a reasonably completed technical protocol for material disposition, but need to start to prepare for future verification challenges as well. And let me be clear. I believe that this task belongs with the Agency. Perhaps not the Agency as we know it today, but a stronger, more powerful version of the body.”

In fact, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) also plays an important role in bringing about a nuke-free world. The Treaty has a unique and comprehensive verification regime to make sure that no nuclear explosion goes undetected. The International Monitoring System (IMS) will, when complete, consist of 337 facilities worldwide to monitor the planet for signs of nuclear explosions. Over 85 percent of the facilities are already up and running.

The importance of such verification regimes cannot be underrated. But political will to do away with nuclear weapons, which are weap-

ons of mass destruction, whoever might use these, is of utmost importance.

For this reason, SGI and the Toda Institute are wedded to the cause of abolishing nuclear weapons. In fact, back in September 1957, Josei Toda made a declaration against nuclear weapons in Yokohama. He said that the willingness to use these weapons was an expression of the devilish nature lurking within human beings, leading them to control and dominate others through fear and threats rather than choosing dialogue and collaboration. Based on Toda’s declaration, SGI President Ikeda has been outlining his vision for a peaceful global civilization in numerous proposals.

In one of his latest ‘peace proposals,’ titled ‘Human Security and Sustainability: Sharing Reverence for the Dignity of Life,’ Ikeda pleads for a nuclear abolition summit in 2015 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of the two cities so that the growing momentum toward elimination of nuclear weapons becomes irreversible.

2015 will also be the year of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference, and, like people around the world, Ikeda expects such a summit to bring home to world leaders the terrible destructive capacity of nuclear weapons and so help ensure the necessary action toward their abolition.

[IDN-InDepthNews - November 29, 2012] ◆

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## AMIDST TURMOIL, NUKE-FREE MIDEAST CONFERENCE DERAILED

BY THALIF DEEN IN NEW YORK

A long outstanding international conference on a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East, scheduled to take place in Finland next month, has been postponed, giving rise to speculation on whether it will ever get off the ground.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, a vigorous opponent of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), remains hopeful the conference will take place sometime next year.

“I have also personally engaged with the states of the region at the highest level to underline the importance of the conference in promoting long-term regional stability, peace and security on the basis of equality,” he said.

But Dr. Rebecca Johnson, director of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, told IPS it is appalling for the people of the Middle East that militarism is still destroying the lives of civilians.

“If the recent tragic developments have also derailed the important Conference on freeing the Middle East of weapons of mass destruction, it will be important to convene early in 2013,” she said.

Dr. Johnson said the date need not be a deal-breaker - but this delay makes it even more important now to start a determined and constructive process to eliminate nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) from the region.

“If the meeting cannot launch an effective process early in 2013, there will be serious consequences not only for the region but for the credibility of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), demonstrat-



ing yet another failure to deliver on its essential agreements,” she warned.

The proposal for the meeting was endorsed by 189 member states at the Review Conference on the NPT held at the United Nations in May 2010. The Israeli government, while criticising the outcome document of that Review Conference, left the door open for participation in the proposed conference.

But the political uprisings in the Arab world, including the ouster of the Israeli-friendly Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, have triggered expressions of Israeli concern - specifically its own security in an increasingly hostile environment.

In a statement released Monday, the secretary-general said he reaffirms his “firm resolve and commitment, together with the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, in consultation with the states of the region, to convene a conference to be attended by all states of the Middle East.”

The focus, he said, will be on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the states of the region.

Hillel Schenker, co-editor of the Palestine-Israel Journal, told IPS that while it’s unfortunate the Helsinki conference will not be convened in 2012, the fact that Ban Ki-moon and the co-conveners, the U.S., UK and Russia, remain committed to the process is very encouraging. It’s understandable, given the circumstances, he said, that it was difficult to convene the conference in December 2012. ➡

*Picture above: Ruins of the Abu Khadra complex for civil administration following an Israeli airstrike on Gaza City. Credit: Mohammed Omer | IPS*



However, the recent statement by the secretary-general expressing hope that the Finnish facilitator will be able “to conduct multilateral consultations in the shortest possible time which will allow the conference to be convened in the earliest possible time in 2013”, means that this valuable process will continue.

“For the conference to succeed, it is crucial that both Iran and Israel be at the table,” Schenker noted. “Hopefully the facilitator, perhaps with the aid of the Americans, will be able to convince the Israeli government of the importance of engaging in this process.”

Still, he said, the Helsinki Conference remains an historic opportunity to move forward on a parallel track, towards the creation of a regional security regime which will contain a Nuclear and WMD-Free Zone and towards Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Arab comprehensive peace.

Meanwhile, the United States which traditionally throws a protective arm around Israel, has already laid down a condition in advance of the pre-conference preparations.

In July 2010, when Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu met with U.S. President Barack Obama, he was assured the Middle East conference would not single out Israel.

A White House statement also insisted the conference would only take place “if all countries feel confident they can attend, and that any efforts to single out Israel will make the prospects of convening such a conference unlikely.”

Speaking at a symposium on “Faith, Dialogue and Integration” at the United Nations Monday, Jonathan Granoff, president of the Global



Security Institute, said nuclear weapons represent a form of security apartheid.

Like apartheid, both sides are injured. And those threatened reasonably feel the terror of destruction, he added, pointing out that those threatening have their moral foundations corroded or live in denial of what they are doing.

“The continued reliance on these horrific devices provides the modern world with its most severe and divisive irony,” he said.

The means of pursuing security are serving to breed insecurity. And the inequity inherent in the system pulls at the fabric of human unity, he added.

As Vartan Gregorian of the Carnegie Corporation recently pointed out, “All declared nuclear powers - the U.S., Russia, Great Britain, France, and China and now India and Pakistan (Israel as an undeclared nuclear power) - insist they possess nuclear weapons only to deter others from using them.”

Yet there have been many times in the past, and there will surely be times in the future, when major powers have used their nuclear capability to gain some political end by intimidation, he said.

Intimidation through the threat of annihilation of millions of innocent people is unjustified legally, morally, and remains the greatest threat to the stimulation of the proliferation of weapons, said Granoff. Thus, continued threat to use these weapons is impractical.

“One must therefore wonder if the irrational pride of power informs the policies of those who seek to perpetuate and ‘improve’ their arsenals of devastation,” he said. [IPS | November 28, 2012] ◆

*Picture: Vartan Gregorian of the Carnegie Corporation | Credit: Wikimedia Commons*

## NATO PUSHING EUROPE INTO NEW NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

BY JULIO GODOY IN BERLIN

Between late 2009 and mid-2010, the German government, represented by its foreign minister Guido Westerwelle, made a case for dismantling B61 atomic bombs on German soil. The actual number of such weapons of mass destruction is a top military secret, but some 20 of these are reported to be stationed in Germany.



the Chicago summit, during the so called deterrence and defence posture review (DDPR).

By so doing, NATO finally admits that the criticism of the present nuclear arsenal is correct - it is constituted of so-called dumb weapons, for they are to be dropped from war planes over target zones, and be

The German campaign for nuclear disarmament had relevance also for Belgium, Italy and the Netherlands - as well as Turkey - where the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is stated to have positioned between 150 and 200 nuclear weapons.

Like his predecessor Frank Walter Steinmeier, Westerwelle made the arguments of the anti-nuclear weapons activists his own, and recalled that such arsenal is in many ways obsolete, for it was conceived to be used in conjunction with other armament that itself is out of use, and it aimed at an enemy - the Soviet bloc - that had ceased to exist.

The German campaign, as discreet as it was, was a timely reaction to the historic speech the U.S. president Barack Obama made in the Czech capital Prague in April 2009, where he called the nuclear weapons spread across the world "the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War".

But soon, the German campaign for the denuclearisation of Europe, very much like Obama's speech in Prague, turned out to be no more than pious words. Already in April 2010, NATO had approved the so-called modernization of its nuclear arsenal in Europe, which should be completed by 2020. The modernisation was confirmed in May 2012 at

guided by a radar that, according to U.S. senate hearings, was constructed in the 1960s and originally designed for "a five-year lifetime".

This radar also features "the now infamous vacuum tubes", as one U.S. military industry representative stated at the senate hearing, and "must be replaced. In addition, both the neutron generator and a battery component are fast approaching obsolescence and must be replaced."

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

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

In 2008, yet another U.S. Air Force review concluded that "most" nuclear weapons locations in Europe did not meet U.S. security guidelines and would "require significant additional resources" to bring these up to standard. The modernisation of this archaic arsenal is expected to take place in two phases. ↻

*Picture: B61 training unit accurately replicates the shape and size of a "live" B61*

*Credit: Wikimedia Commons*

In a first step, the B61 bombs currently deployed in Europe will be returned to the United States starting 2016 and converted into precision guided nuclear weapons (the so called B61-life extension programme or B61 LEP) and then brought back to Europe as B61-12, with improved military capabilities around 2019/2020. In addition, a new stealth fighter-bomber - the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter - is under construction to begin deployment to Europe in the early 2020s.

However, this modernisation contradicts NATO's assessment of the present arsenal, and undermines other declared objectives of the military alliance.

First, in its DDPR of May 2012, NATO affirms that "the Alliance's nuclear force posture currently meets the criteria for an effective deterrence and defence posture". As numerous critics of NATO's nuclear arsenal point out, if this arsenal is so efficient, why then is it necessary to improve its capabilities?

This is all the more absurd, since the B61-LE "is very expensive, currently more than 10 billion U.S. dollars," as Hans M. Kristensen, director of the Nuclear Information Project with the Federation of American Scientists, said November 7, 2012 during a hearing at the Disarmament and Foreign Affairs Committee of the German Parliament in Berlin.

This high cost, Kristensen added, "is partly said to be necessary to upgrade safety and security features of the bomb. It is a mystery why that is necessary given that the (nuclear) weapons in Europe are always said to be safe and secure."

But the contradictions go beyond the mere nature of the assessment and the technical obsolescence of the nuclear armament. Its modernisation also constitutes a challenge to Russia. For, if the NATO description of the new B61 weapons is to be believed, they would be laser-controlled, thus substantially increasing its precision, and be practically able to hit targets within an error margin of less than 30 meters.

Or, as Kristensen puts it, "The addition of the guided tail kit will increase the accuracy of the B61-12 compared with the current versions and result in a greater target kill capability than the B61 versions currently deployed in Europe." It is worth to note that the U.S. Congress in 1992 rejected a similar guided bomb proposal out of the concern that it would make nuclear weapons appear more useable.

Such precision would transform the B61 nuclear bombs into a rather flexible arsenal, deployable both as a tactical and as a strategic weapon, and no longer only under the present archaic conditions. "Such a change would revive the worst apprehensions the (post-)Soviet leadership had during the Pershing-II debate" of the late 1970s, early 1980s, warns the German nuclear weapons expert Otfried Nassauer, director of the Berlin information centre for transatlantic security (BITS), and co-author of a recent study on the B61-LEP.

That way, Europe would be heading towards a repetition of the ill-reputed "NATO double-track decision" of December 1979. With this decision, the NATO announced the deployment across Western Europe of 572 mobile middle range missiles, of the types Pershing II and BGM-109 Tomahawk Gryphon Ground-Launched Cruise Missiles, to counter the Soviet deployment of SS-20 mobile missiles in Eastern Europe. The result was a most feared nuclear arms race in the heart of Europe, to rebuild the Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), which threatened to annihilate life on the continent.

Officially, NATO nuclear weapons in Europe are aimed at targets in the Middle East, especially against Iran. Russia, so NATO's official line, has no reasons to fear the modernisation of the B61 weapons. However, such a view is at best naïve, at worst cynical. For everybody in the NATO knows how the Russian leadership reacts to such modernisation plans.

Though the Soviet Union never disclosed how large its tactical nuclear arsenal was, experts believe that Russia still has between 500 and 700 nuclear weapons mostly aimed at targets in Western Europe. ➡

This horrendous mass of nuclear weapons is as antiquated as the NATO's; and the obsolescence and the threat of a modern nuclear arsenal in the hands of a likely enemy, are reasons enough to foresee how the Russian government would react - by modernising its own arsenal.

On the other hand, the European opposition to the B61-LEP is almost non-existent. In Germany, despite all the words the foreign ministry used to campaign for nuclear disarmament, the official government programme of 2009, valid today, explicitly adhered to NATO's so called "nuclear sharing policy", which lets European member countries without nuclear weapons of their own participate in the planning for the use of the B61 stationed on their territories.

As German chancellor Angela Merkel said in March 2009, the German government "should be careful and avoid mixing up the goals with the ways leading to them. The German government has fixed the nuclear sharing policy ... to secure our influence within NATO in this highly sensitive area".

Similar positions prevail in the other European NATO countries affected by the "nuclear sharing policy". According to Roderich Kiesewetter, military expert at the ruling CDU party, "the small European countries consider the deployment of nuclear weapons on their territory as a political appreciation of their own position. The Turkish government has even made clear that it would readily take the B61 positioned in Germany, if we were to reject them."

Other countries, such as Belgium and Netherlands, have also announced that they would upgrade their aircraft military capabilities, to make them compatible with the new B61 nuclear weapons. To that effect, they would command the new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter airplane, to replace their F-16 and B-16 military airplanes which are unable to transport nuclear bombs. Germany still refuses to replace the similarly old Tornado planes, in the pitiful hope, as the military analyst Jochen Bittner put it in the weekly newspaper Die Zeit, "that the

nuclear weapons disappear faster than the military airplanes corrode".

Like Germany, Italy also uses Tornado aircrafts, and Turkey F-16 airplanes to transport the nuclear arsenal. That is, the five European countries disposing of nuclear weapons use three different types of aircraft to transport them. As Kristensen puts it, "Adding B61-12 capability to five different types of aircraft (the U.S. military uses yet another different airplane) in six Air Forces is excessive, complex and expensive for the type of security challenges that face NATO today. More importantly, it demonstrates that the nuclear posture is patched together by leftover pieces from an outdated posture rather than reduced, streamlined and adapted to the military and fiscal realities of today."

Despite all these technical, military, and political obstacles, German government military expert Kiesewetter argues that the NATO would reconsider the B61 LEP only if Russia were ready to disclose the dimensions and locations of its huge tactical nuclear arsenal. However, he also points out that, even in case of such a dialogue, the modernisation of the European nuclear weapons must go on. "Political weapons must be technical functional," he said, implicitly admitting the obsolescence of the present arsenal.

Kiesewetter's stance chimes with NATO's official attitude towards Russia. In the DDRP of May 2012, NATO said that in a bi-polar arms control policy "any further steps must take into account the disparity with the greater Russian stockpiles of short-range nuclear weapons," and be considered "in the context of reciprocal steps by Russia."

In other words, says Kristensen, of the Nuclear Information Project, "Given that Russia's non-strategic nuclear posture is not determined by NATO's nuclear posture in Europe but by inferior conventional forces, making further NATO reductions conditioned upon Russian reciprocity and disparity would appear to effectively surrender the arms control initiative to the hardliners in the Kremlin."

[IDN-InDepthNews - November 21, 2012] ◆

## HIROSHIMA AND NAGASAKI WANT NUKES ABOLISHED

BY RAMESH JAURA FROM TOKYO

Much to the chagrin of several millions in Japan and beyond, who are relentlessly campaigning for a nuclear weapons-free world, the government in Tokyo has declined to join an initiative calling for efforts to outlaw nukes out of concern it would affect the country's security arrangement under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. But the mayors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima as well as the Hiroshima Prefecture's Governor remain unwavering in their impassioned commitment to abolition of nuclear weapons.

The initiative at issue was announced at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on October 22, 2012 by Swiss Ambassador Benno Laggner on behalf of the 34 member states - Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Liechtenstein, Malaysia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Samoa, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Swaziland, Thailand, Uruguay,

The joint statement calls on all states to "intensify their efforts to outlaw nuclear weapons and achieve a world free of nuclear weapons" and expresses "deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons". Referring to "the horrific consequences" of the use of nuclear arsenals, made clear by the suffering caused by the U.S. atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, the joint statement says the only way to guarantee that such weapons are never used again is "the total, irreversible and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons."



The move was initiated by 16 member states of the United Nations: which include Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Holy See, Egypt, Indonesia, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa and Switzerland.

At a preparatory committee (PrepCom) meeting on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference on May 2, 2012 in Vienna, they issued a similar statement. But, unlike this time, they did not ask Japan to endorse the initiative.

Explaining Japan's decision, senior vice foreign minister Kazuya Shinba said at a news conference in Tokyo on October 22: "We have decided to refrain from participating" in the initiative, adding that it "isn't necessarily consistent with our country's national security policy".

Soon after the Japanese government's intention was reported on October 19, 2012, the Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) to urge that the country has a moral obligation - as the only nation that underwent nuclear holocaust - by endorsing the joint statement.

Taue, mayor since 2007, is also vice president of the Mayors for Peace organisation, which was established in 1982 by the mayors of Nagasaki and Hiroshima - on which the U.S. dropped atomic bombs in August 1945 killing more than 200,000 women, children and elderly. Those who survived the first atom bombs in history - known as Hibakusha - suffer even now from the aftereffects of radiation. ☺

*Picture: Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki (Left to right) Credit: Mayors for Peace*

According to reports, MOFA explained to Mayor Taue that it was difficult for the Japanese government to have it both ways - approving the joint statement seeking to outlaw nuclear weapons on the one hand and being protected by the nuclear umbrella provided by the U.S. on the other.

After meeting with MOFA officials, Taue reiterated his view in an interview with Nagasaki Broadcasting Company (NBC) published on October 19 on YouTube that the joint statement was just urging nations to make efforts towards outlawing nuclear weapons; therefore, Japan should take a clear stand by supporting the statement.

Taue was born in 1956, a decade after atomic bombs laid waste the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But the eyewitness accounts of those who survived the bombings left a deep impression on him and inspired him to become a crusader for a nuclear weapons-free world.

His commitment was also underlined in an eminent civil society presentation to the Prepcom for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in Vienna. The Nagasaki Mayor asked government representatives: "Isn't it absurd that investing the immense sum of 1.63 trillion dollars worldwide on military expenditures such as in 2010 in the name of national security has only led to a more dangerous world? Is it not time now to display the strong will required to free us from that danger?"

Like Mayor Taue, Mayor Kazumi Matsui, who was born in 1953 in Hiroshima as son to a Hibakusha father, has also been championing the cause of nuke abolition. In fact, he has been exploring the possibility of holding the 2015 NPT Review Conference in Hiroshima city.

On August 6, 2012 - remembering the day atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 - Matsui said: "People of the world! Especially leaders of nuclear-armed nations, please come to Hiroshima to contemplate peace in this A-bombed city."

During a meeting with a team of journalists in September, he pointed out that in 2012, which marked the 30th anniversary of the Mayors for

Peace, the number of cities calling for the total abolition of nuclear weapons by 2020 has passed 5,300, and members now represent approximately a billion people. "Next August, we will hold a 'Mayors for Peace' general conference in Hiroshima," he said.

"That event will convey to the world the intense desire of the overwhelming majority of our citizens for a nuclear weapons convention and elimination of nuclear weapons. In Spring 2014, Hiroshima will host a ministerial meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative comprising ten non-nuclear-weapon states, including Japan. I firmly believe that the demand for freedom from nuclear weapons will soon spread out from Hiroshima, encircle the globe, and lead us to genuine world peace," Mayor Matsui added.

### 'Global Peace' plan

He and the Hiroshima Prefecture's Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki who has launched 'Global Peace' plan - formally announced on November 4, 2011 - are in fact 'Hiroshima twins' relentlessly campaigning for a nuclear weapons-free world. Under the plan the Prefecture aims to be actively involved in multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations and the development of human resources for peace-building thereby boosting efforts to abolish nuclear weapons.

During a meeting arranged by Hiroshima Soka Gakkai in September, Governor Yuzaki said that the Prefecture had come up with a new approach by which Hiroshima can work toward peace over the next 50 or 60 years. "Thus far Hiroshima has had an influence on the world through the atomic bombing survivors' accounts of their experiences and in other ways. Through this plan Hiroshima will continue to exert its influence on the world but in a new form."

The action plan, the core of the overall plan, consists of five elements: 1) support the creation of a road map for nuclear abolition; 2) reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism; 3) develop human resources for the building of a peaceful international community; 4) amass research on nuclear disarmament, conflict resolution and peace-building; and 5) create a sustainable mechanism to back peace. ☺

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Specifically, one of the plan's goals is the start of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, and it proposes holding a 'Hiroshima roundtable' in which senior government officials of nuclear-weapon states could participate as individuals.

The plan would also create a mechanism for the evaluation and "grading" of disarmament efforts such as the implementation of the final report of the review conference of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty. It further proposes the creation of a centre for research and the training of experts to assume responsibility for the resolution of regional conflicts.

Against the backdrop of Nagasaki and Hiroshima striving for a nuclear weapons-free world, the Japanese MOFA's announcement is a source of concern to representatives of the opposition New Komei party's committee for the promotion of nuclear abolition. Addressing Foreign Minister Koichiro Genba, the committee's four members from the lower and upper house of the National Diet have stressed the inhuman aspect of nuclear weapons.

Referring to the debate in the first committee of the UN General Assembly, they point out that Norway will hold a conference in Oslo in March 2013 to focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear detonations, as well as ability to respond to such a disaster credibly and effectively. The conference will provide greater insight and a fact-based understanding of the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear detonation, deputy director general and head of the division for disarma-



ment, non-proliferation and export control in Norway's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Inga M.W. Nyhamar, informed on October 18.

The Japanese government's decision not to endorse the joint statement, backed by 34 nations, sounds puzzling for yet another reason: At the fifth ministerial meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) - initiated by Japan and Australia - on September 26, 2012, Tokyo endorsed a joint statement, which affirmed:

"We, the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates, resolve to move forward with practical steps that will advance the implementation of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference Action Plan ('Action

Plan') and to pursue the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We acknowledge the efforts of many states towards achieving these objectives but also recognise that much more needs to be done."

Also Ambassador Mari Amano said during the UNGA First Committee discussions on October 17 that "the tragic consequences of nuclear weapon use must never be repeated". He added: "As the only country to have suffered from atomic bombings, Japan had engaged in practical and progressive efforts for a world without nuclear weapons. As part of those ongoing efforts, Japan would once again be submitting to this Committee a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament entitled 'United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons'."

\*Katsuhiro Asagiri, IDN's Asia-Pacific bureau chief and IPS Japan president, contributed to this article from Tokyo.

[IDN-InDepthNews - October 25, 2012] ◆

*Picture above: Governor Hidehiko Yuzaki  
Credit: Hiroshima Prefecture*

## AUSTRALIA-NZ PACT FALLS SHORT OF ABOLISHING NUKES

BY NEENA BHANDARI IN SYDNEY

Australia and New Zealand have entered into a scientific and technical cooperation agreement to strengthen detection of nuclear explosions under the framework of the international Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and work together to promote a permanent and effective ban on nuclear weapon tests.

Welcoming the new framework to support the CTBT, Australian Foreign Minister Bob Carr said: "International cooperation enhances the ability of scientific experts to provide advice to their governments on whether a nuclear test has occurred. Cooperation between Australia and New Zealand can serve as a model for others around the world and will strengthen the CTBT."

The framework for bilateral cooperation is set out in a memorandum of understanding between the Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It describes its key aims as aiding sound scientific and technical analysis by Australian and New Zealand agencies of data and information related to verification of the CTBT; promoting the development of similar capacity in regional countries; and promoting development of effective verification tools and methodologies for the CTBT.

The move would see Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency and Geoscience Australia working more closely with New Zealand's Environmental Science and Research (ESR) to enhance their capabilities to detect nuclear explosions.

Carr said in a statement: "Australia strongly advocates the earliest possible entry into force of the CTBT, so we are taking technical steps to prepare for that time." Australia and New Zealand signed the scientific and technical cooperation agreement on September 28, 2012. But Chairman of the Mayors for Peace Foundation and former expert advisor to the Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, Steve

Leeper, feels countries like Australia that have signed and ratified the CTBT should be doing far more than talking about a new framework.

"It makes it look like the two countries are doing something about nuclear weapons when what they are really doing is refusing to support the nuclear weapons convention. They should be applying serious diplomatic and even economic pressure on the United States to force it to ratify the Treaty," Leeper told IDN.

He suggests that one way to do this would be to launch an initiative to deny the U.S. and other non-signatories the extremely valuable information about seismic activity and radiation releases and tests now being gathered by the remarkable network of monitoring stations created by the CTBT Organisation.

The Treaty calls for cooperation among its parties to strengthen their ability to use the monitoring system to verify whether a nuclear explosion has taken place.

The CTBT Organisation has completed work on a global network of over 300 facilities to monitor the environment for acoustic waves and radionuclide particulates and gases from a possible nuclear explosion. Data collected by these facilities is made available to CTBT parties, who have the final responsibility in determining which events - about 30,000 per year - could be a nuclear explosion.

Leeper said: "The CTBT is part of the so-called step-by-step approach, which is nothing more than an effort to trick the non-nuclear weapon states into continuing to abide by the non-proliferation treaty while the nuclear-weapon states continue to maintain their nuclear advantage forever. Japan and Australia are two countries devoted to the step-by-step approach because they don't want to irritate the nuclear weapon states. We need to move quickly beyond the CTBT to



a Nuclear Weapons Convention and we need Australia and New Zealand solidly behind the comprehensive approach."

CTBT opened for signature on September 24, 1996 and since 183 countries have signed it, but it is still awaiting ratification by specified states before it can enter into force. With Indonesia's ratification of the Treaty earlier this year (2012), 36 Annex 2 states have now ratified the CTBT. Currently, eight remaining Annex 2 states (China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States of America) must ratify in order for the Treaty to be legally binding.

Annex 2 states are the 44 countries designated "nuclear-capable states" that participated in the negotiations of the CTBT from 1994-1996 and that possessed nuclear power reactors or research reactors at that time. In the past 16 years, progress has been made to develop a verification system and analysis techniques to detect and investigate a possible nuclear explosion anywhere around the globe.

### **'Prohibit nuclear weapons completely'**

According to a spokesperson for the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, "A permanent and verifiable ban on nuclear testing through the CTBT is a vital building block for non-proliferation and disarmament. Australia continues to press for its earliest entry into force".

However, a growing number of nations, organisations and prominent individuals around the world are now calling for negotiations to start on a treaty that prohibits nuclear weapons completely, not just nuclear testing. In recent years, many governments have voiced support for a nuclear-weapon-free world, but precious little has been done to reach that goal.

As International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Australia's Director, Tim Wright said: "Although the CTBT has certainly helped to restrain some nuclear developments, it has not provided - and was never intended to provide - the necessary legal framework to

halt the modernisation of nuclear forces or prevent nuclear proliferation, let alone achieve the complete elimination of nuclear weapons."

"This is where governments should focus their diplomatic efforts. Negotiations need not, and must not, await the entry into force of the CTBT. We need nuclear-free countries to play a leading role, rather than simply waiting for the nuclear-armed countries to act. This is an urgent humanitarian necessity," Wright told IDN.

Australian Red Cross in conjunction with Flinders University and the Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre at University of South Australia are co-hosting a conference in Adelaide in the first week of November 2012 to advance the debate on the urgent need to develop a legally binding tool to prohibit and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons.

The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have been at the centre of the nuclear weapons debate from the very outset. From 1945 to 2011, the Movement has consistently voiced its deep concerns about these weapons of mass destruction and the need for the prohibition of their use.

In November 2011, the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement had come together to pass a resolution, which appealed to all states to "pursue in good faith and conclude with urgency and determination negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement". The resolution has since attracted worldwide attention, including garnering support from the Australian parliament.

As ICAN Australia Advisory Board Member, Catriona Standfield said, "It is the civil society, which first ignited the movement for a nuclear weapons ban, and it has continued to be the most vocal supporter of disarmament and non-proliferation in the face of inaction by nuclear weapon states". "Civil society continues to be the primary arena in which young people like me become involved in the push for a nuclear weapons ban. [IDN-InDepthNews - October 21, 2012] ♦

## THORNY ROAD AHEAD FOR MIDDLE EAST CONFERENCE

BY RAMESH JAURA IN BERLIN

A veil of silence and secrecy has shrouded the fate of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in 2012, since the UN announced on October 14, 2011 that Finland will host it. The veil slowly lifting now corresponds to the "wall of silence" in Israel, which Israeli anti-nuke activist Sharon Dolev is persistently trying to break - with some success.

Knowledgeable sources in Berlin, London and Helsinki are convinced that the conference will indeed take place - from December 14 to 16 with seasoned Finnish diplomat and politician Jaakko Laajava as facilitator. However, hardly anyone appears to be particularly enthusiastic about it.

In fact, as Kate Hudson, general secretary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and a leading anti-nuclear and anti-war campaigner says, "many will see this proposal as a pipedream". She adds: "There are of course significant obstacles to overcome before this conference can succeed, but certainly, the biggest threat to the region would be failure."

Reporting about obstacles to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) preparatory committee meeting early May 2012 in Vienna, Laajava said that although he had conducted more than 100 meetings - both inside and outside the region - he had yet to secure an agreement from all relevant states on participation.

"News of Laajava's no-news statement was met with another round of eye-rolling and finger-pointing: The likely holdouts are Israel and Iran,



with a major question mark hanging over Syrian participation," wrote Martin B. Malin in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists.

But Malin - who is the executive director of the Project on Managing the Atom at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government - is nevertheless optimistic that Israel may come to see as the least unpalatable option negotiations with its neighbours to establish rules for limiting the possession of WMD (weapons of mass destruction) across the region, eventually putting its own capabilities on the negotiating table.

"Discussing a WMD-free zone would allow Israel to prolong its nuclear weapons monopoly with the fewest challenges for an interim period, while negotiating the terms of a transition to a nuclear and WMD free Middle East. It can also use a forum on regional arms control as a venue to raise its concerns about proliferation elsewhere in the region," avers Malin.

In his view, Iran too has important security interests in pursuing a WMD-free zone. Because Tehran has a long-term strategic interest in denuclearizing Israel, and, "odious as it might seem to Iran's leaders, direct negotiations with Israel on regional security and a WMD ban are the only way to do that."

Facilitator Laajava has formally asked Iran to participate in the planned conference, the Fars News Agency reported. He made the request on September 10, 2012 during a meeting in Tehran with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mehdi Akhoundzadeh. ☺

With the planned dates fast approaching, the conference facilitator and civil society organisations are faced with a huge task to persuade key participants that, as Hudson says, nuclear weapons-free zones (NWFZs) are highly successful forms of collective security across large parts of the world. Currently, 115 states and 18 other territories belong to five regional treaties, covering a majority of the earth's surface, including almost the entire southern hemisphere.

### Iran initiated

The establishment of such a zone in the Middle East was first proposed in 1974 by Iran, now being ostracised for its alleged nuke development programme. Egypt extended the proposal in 1990 to include other WMD (weapons of mass destruction), reflecting the serious concern around chemical and biological warfare in the region. A resolution on achieving a WMD-free zone was adopted at the 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

Fifteen years later, the 2010 NPT Review Conference identified five steps necessary towards the goal of establishing a WMD-free zone in the Middle East, including convening a regional conference in 2012 and appointing a facilitator.

"Failure to move forward in establishing a WMD-free zone will in fact mean that the stakes will remain higher in any potential conflict. And the stakes are always a human cost," cautions CND's Hudson.

Hudson rightly points out that NWFZs are fundamental mechanisms for tackling precisely these insecurities and subsequent escalations. The Treaty of Tlatelolco (South America) included two competing treaty members, Argentina and Brazil, both with large nuclear power industries with the capability of developing nuclear weapons. The treaty provided the confidence-building framework and a norm of non-proliferation which defused the potential and perceived need for pursuing nuclear weapons systems.

Voicing general concern, the Egyptian Foreign Ministry says in a document submitted in May 2012 to the planning committee of the NPT

Review Conference in 2015 that the Arab League sees the conference in Finland as an important crossroad with regard to its nuclear policies. It believes that if realistic and practical steps towards WMD disarmament cannot be agreed upon, then nuclear proliferation will become a dangerous reality across the region. The international community should therefore do all it can to avert this.

There is a pressing need for open discussions about security concerns and weapons capacity, which will be vital to the success of WMD-free zone in the Middle East: and it begins with opening channels of communication which are the building blocks of peace and genuine security.

This is what Dolev has been doing with a handful of activists under the umbrella of the Greenpeace and in cooperation, among others, with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN).

In the face of uncertainty about Israeli participation in the conference, the evolution of the Treaty of Tlatelolco may in fact serve as a role model for the Middle East conference in Finland, suggests Dolev during a visit to Berlin.

The possibility is not ruled out that like Argentina, to begin with Israel (and Iran) stay away from signing any agreement. But the conference could trigger landmark co-operation and negotiations which would be essential in establishing a WMD-free zone would be positive for intra-regional relations.

"And while states may be cautious in their approach, if they believe that this can be a serious framework for peaceful co-existence then of course they would be supportive. Such caution can be gradually turned to confidence, through robust and transparent verification measures, as well as binding mechanisms with teeth," says Hudson.

### Call a spade a spade

Xanthe Hall, the nuclear disarmament campaigner at German affiliate of Nobel laureate International Physicians for the Prevention of Nu-

clear War (IPPNW), says Germany as a close partner of Israel should do its best to persuade Tel Aviv to participate in the proposed conference in all seriousness.

This necessitates calling a spade that Israel possesses nuclear weapons and holding on to the Cold War thinking justifies these as deterrence.

"While the entire world is constantly discussing Israel and its nuclear capability, within Israel, ambiguity is alive and well and the 'issue' has become taboo," says Dolev at a 'meet the press' organised by IPPNW Germany, adding:

"If we as a society give any thought to the nuclear issue, it is to the Iranian nuclear weapons, which has not yet become a reality. If the subject of nuclear weapons in the Middle East is raised among us, we immediately point to Iran (which unlike Israel is an NPT signatory)."

Dolev explains the prevailing situation: "Like the hunchback who does not see his hump, we do not see, hear or think about our own weapons, nor do we question their necessity beyond saying from time to time that we can always strike Iran with nuclear weapons. Even then, we say it without considering the fact that Israel is a nuclear state.

Though Israelis are open to debate, they not only tend to consider the nuclear question taboo but also rather complex for expressing dissenting opinions. Subsequently, most people accept that only top acting political and military leaders assume that right, only in closed forums.

"Any relevant information in Hebrew is rare; information in English is abundant but arduous to analyse," says journalist Pierre Klochender. "The absence of discussion stems also from the fact that, since the inception of its own nuclear programme in the late 1950s, Israel has officially stuck to a policy of 'ambiguity': it 'won't be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons in the region" is the official posture.

Ambiguity therefore means that the international community should continue to ignore Dimona, believed to be the centre of the Israeli nuclear programme, and focus solely on Natanz, allegedly the nerve centre of the Iranian nuclear programme.

Israeli government officials praise "ambiguity" as it enhances Israel's security almost as much as WMD. Assuming such a policy is necessary, anti-nuclear activists propose a debate which would respect the constraints of not exposing Israel's nuclear capability. Such discussion would strengthen the democratic character of their society.

"It's still possible, even obligatory, to hold serious discussions about the need for nuclear weapons, the dangers they present regionally and globally, and the various possibilities for disarmament," says Dolev.

The sense of creativity which permeates the activities of Dolev and her supports is reflected also in the visit of four survivors of the Hiroshima nuclear bomb massacre (the Hibakusha) to Israel and their meetings with broad sections of the society, including survivors of the holocaust. Such meetings drew attention to the catastrophic nature of nuclear arsenal.

Dolev's actions are guided by the underlying conviction that "Israel's practice of hiding in the bunker of ambiguity is perceived as a threat and not as a gesture of non-violence or as an absence of an intended threat."

On the other hand, an anti-nuclear movement in Israel that would bring the question of the country's nuclear policy to national and global media attention would reveal a more open Israel, an Israel with which one can talk and, moreover, an Israel with a democratic society that is not monolithic, where different opinions exist and can be expressed, maintains Dolev. [IDN-InDepthNews - October 17, 2012] ♦

## ISRAEL'S HYPOCRISY ON A NUCLEAR MIDDLE EAST

BY THALIF DEEN IN NEW YORK

When world leaders packed their bags and headed home, there was one lingering memory of the General Assembly's high-level debate: Benjamin Netanyahu's dramatic presentation on Sep. 27 of a cartoonish nuclear red line, which hit the front pages of most mainstream newspapers in the United States.

The Israeli prime minister warned Iran against crossing that red line even though the Jewish state itself had crossed it when it went nuclear many moons ago.

As Mouin Rabbani, contributing editor to the Middle East Report, told IPS, "The real absurdity of Netanyahu lecturing the world about nuclear weapons was precisely that - an Israeli leader lecturing the world about the dangers of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East."

The fact of the matter is that not only is Israel the region's sole nuclear power, and not only has it on previous occasions all but threatened to use these weapons of mass destruction, but it has since its establishment consistently and steadfastly rejected ratification of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Rabbani said.

"It's a bit like listening to (Hustler magazine publisher) Larry Flynt denouncing pornography - though to be fair to Flynt, it's unlikely he will reach the levels of hypocrisy displayed by Netanyahu," said Rabbani, a Middle East expert who has written extensively on the politics



of the volatile region. Still, most Middle East leaders, speaking during the high-level debate here, seem to have accepted Israel's double standards on nuclear politics - and with hardly an aggressive response to Netanyahu's address to the Assembly.

Besides standard bearers like Jordan's King Abdullah and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, the new generation of Arab leaders who addressed the General Assembly included Mohamed Morsi of Egypt, Yemeni President Abd Rabbu Mansour Hadi, Libya's Mohamed Yousef El Magarief and Tunisia's Moncef Marzouki.

As one Asian diplomat put it, "Nethanyahu's nuke-oriented speech ended with a bang while the speeches of most Middle East leaders ended with a whimper."

Asked why Arab leaders were reticent, Ian Williams, a senior analyst at Foreign Policy in Focus and Deadline Pundit, told IPS, "Perhaps one of the problems is that Arab leaders and their people are so aware that Israel has nuclear weapons they do not realise how much of a taboo subject it is in the West.

"So while they have on other occasions referred to Israel's nuclear capacity, they were slow to riposte on the flagrant hypocrisy of Netanyahu posturing with a cutout card bomb while standing on 200 real ones," said Williams, a longstanding observer of Middle Eastern poli-

tics. Even as Iran continues to insist that its nuclear programme is only for peaceful purposes, Israel continues to taunt the Iranians.

As Netanyahu told delegates last week, “The relevant question is not when Iran will get the bomb but at what stage can we no longer stop Iran from getting the bomb.”

Rabbani told IPS, “Many observers commented on the - literally and figuratively - cartoonish nature of his remarks, replete with a Looney Tunes graphic of a bomb with fuse.

“If Netanyahu wanted to present a point of view with potential interest, he would instead have explained why Israel remains committed to rejecting the long-standing Egyptian initiative for a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and more importantly, why Israel only days before Netanyahu mounted the U.N. podium rejected participation in the Helsinki conference to be held later this year and backed by the U.S., to debate the establishment of a nuclear-weapons free zone in the Middle East,” Rabbani added.

He said Arab leaders appear not to have directly challenged Israel’s war-mongering towards Iran - in part because some Arab states desperately hope such an attack materialises.

Others either do not want to strain relations with influential Arab states for whom containment of Iran is their primary foreign policy objective, or risk tensions with Washington by being seen as supporting Iran in its conflict with Israel.

“It is a very different Arab world than existed mere decades ago. Yet it is also beginning to change, and is in the process of a fundamental transformation,” Rabbani said.

Thus Egyptian President Morsi devoted more than a few words to the Palestine question, and spoke about it in ways that were unthinkable

during the Mubarak era. “Expect to see more of the same in years ahead,” he said.

Rabbani also said there is a growing perception in the Middle East that the United States is going the way of the British and French before them, that its imperial moment is behind it and that “we are witnessing the gradual decline of American influence in the region.”

This in part helps explain why so many Arab leaders felt the need to harp on about the controversy ignited by the ludicrous yet patently offensive video clip “Innocence of Muslims”, which ignited protests throughout the Muslim world.

“The video, or at least reports about it, caused genuine outrage in the region. And condemning this clip was a convenient method for leaders known to be excessively close to Washington to demonstrate they haven’t yet surrendered that final shred of national dignity,” Rabbani said.

Williams said Morsi was relatively circumspect in addressing the controversial video.

“Christian leaders in the West have called for blasphemy laws to be applied in the past and few countries are absolutists on free speech. His approach was balanced with nuances to head off criticism at home and abroad,” Williams added.

“His engagement of Iran over Syria did of course challenge the U.S.-Israeli consensus, but he is not alone and already seems to have produced some results since (Iranian President Mahmoud) Ahmedinijad’s discursive speech did not mention Syria.” [IPS | October 2012] ♦

*Picture on page 67: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses the general debate of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Credit: UN Photo/J Carrier*

## SNAIL'S PACE TOWARDS BAN ON NUKE TESTING

BY JAMSHED BARUAH FROM VIENNA

Since the then Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru called for a "standstill agreement" on nuclear testing on April 2, 1954, 183 out of 196 states around the world have signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) that bans atomic explosions by everyone, everywhere: on the Earth's surface, in the atmosphere, underwater and underground.

157 countries including three of the nuclear weapon States - France, Russia and Britain - have ratified the treaty. But before the CTBT can enter into force, 44 specific nuclear technology holder countries must sign and ratify it. Of these, eight are still missing: China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the USA. In fact, India, North Korea and Pakistan have yet to sign the treaty.

Nevertheless since September 24, 1996 when the CTBT opened for signature at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, following three years of intense negotiations, the world has become slightly safer. Because the treaty has a unique and comprehensive verification regime to make sure that no nuclear explosion goes undetected.

In the five decades before the CTBT, over 2,000 nuclear tests shook and irradiated the planet. But, according to the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), the post-CTBT world saw only a handful of nuclear tests: those by India and Pakistan in 1998 and by North Korea in 2006 and 2009.

All these met universal condemnation, including unanimously adopted UN Security Council sanctions. "The zero-tolerance stance against nuclear tests is reflected by the number of States Signatories to the CTBT: 183, or over 90% of all countries," avers the Vienna-based CTBTO, headed by the Executive Secretary, Tibor Tóth from Hungary.



### Joint call

And yet there is no reason for complacency. With this in view, foreign ministers and other high-level representatives, who met on September 27 at the UN headquarters in New York, issued a joint call for the entry into force of the CTBT.

In their joint statement, the foreign ministers described the CTBT's entry into force as "a vital step towards the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons by constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons...We call upon all States

that have not done so to sign and ratify the Treaty, in particular the remaining eight Annex 2 States [these are China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States]."

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon echoed this appeal, [urging](#) the states that have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT: "You are failing to live up to your responsibility as a member of the international community."

### Reykjavik event

CTBTO Executive Secretary Tóth provided the historical context to the meeting against the background of the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis. He called for political leadership to overcome the nuclear danger, stressing that the CTBT is a milestone on the way to a nuclear-weapon free world.

The meeting at the UN headquarters was co-hosted by the foreign ministers of Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands and Sweden. ↻

Pulitzer Prize-winner Richard Rhodes, author of the Reykjavik play, reminded delegates that the risk of nuclear extinction is man-made. Thus a man-made solution could be found, as the 1986 Reykjavik summit had demonstrated. In Reykjavik, U.S. President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev had come close to an agreement to abolish their nuclear arsenals: "A nuclear-weapon free world is not a utopian dream," Rhodes said. He also invited all delegates to the performance of the Reykjavik play later that day at the Baruch Performing Arts Center in New York.

The play re-enacts the moment in October 1986 at the Reykjavik summit in Iceland when Reagan (Richard Easton) and Mikhail Gorbachev (Jay O. Sanders) came close to abolishing all nuclear weapons. More than 25 years later, the drama of the meeting and its potential to fundamentally change the course of history continues to ignite the imagination and inspire hopes for the future. The performance is directed by Tyler Marchant and produced by Primary Stages.

With the file on the Reykjavik negotiations declassified, key players from the summit are now able to speak freely. In the panel discussion after the performance they considered lessons learned, opportunities

missed and what is needed today to move forward in eliminating nuclear weapons.

"In the current political climate, which is still clouded by nuclear threats, revisiting Reykjavik is a reminder that strong leadership, with political will and vision, can act to make nuclear disarmament breakthroughs," said Tóth. "It is time for the world's leaders to heed Reykjavik's message. In particular, from the eight remaining countries needed to bring the treaty into force."

As far as India is concerned, it has expressed its "regret that the (CTBT) text, as has finally emerged, does not do justice to the negotiating mandate. It is not a comprehensive ban but merely a ban on nuclear explosive testing. It also lacks a definitive commitment to nuclear disarmament".

However, according to the CTBTO, Keith Hansen, part of the United States' CTBT negotiating team, believed that India's refusal to sign the CTBT reflected not only dissatisfaction with the treaty, but also a desire to join the 'Nuclear Club' of nuclear armed countries. [IDN- InDepthNews - October 2, 2012] ♦

*Photo on page 69: CTBTO Executive Secretary Tibor Tóth | Credit: CTBTO Photographer Michael Pressman*





## PRESSURE MOUNTS ON NUCLEAR STATES TO RATIFY TEST BAN

BY HAIDER RIZVI IN NEW YORK

The United States and a small group of other nuclear-armed nations are apparently coming under increasing pressure to accept the international community's resolve to legally ban nuclear testing without delay.



“The elimination of nuclear weapons is the ultimate guarantee that they will never be used, and the best non-proliferation mechanism,” Carl Bildt, the Swedish foreign minister, told delegates at a high-level ministerial meeting held here Thursday in support of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The Swedish minister, who was joined by his counterparts from Australia, the Netherlands, Indonesia, Japan, Finland, Canada and other nations, added: “Ending nuclear testing is a critical step toward nuclear disarmament.”

The treaty prohibits “any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion” anywhere in the world. Opened for signature in September 1996, the treaty has been signed by 183 nations and ratified by 157. However, it cannot be enforced without ratification by 44 countries that had nuclear power or research reactors when the CTBT was negotiated.

Most of those nations have ratified the treaty, but the United States, China, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Israel, Iran, and Egypt remain unwilling to do so. In 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama declared his intention to seek Senate reconsideration of the treaty. The administration has given no firm timeframe for action.

In order to verify compliance with its provisions, the treaty establishes a global network of monitoring facilities and allows for on-site in-

spectations of suspicious events. The overall accord contains a preamble, 17 treaty articles, two annexes, and a protocol for verification procedures.

In their joint statement, the foreign ministers urged countries that have not signed and or ratified the treaty not to cause further delay in the implementation process. The CTBTO Executive Secretary Tibor Tóth provided the historical context to the meeting against the background of the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

“Fifty years ago, nearly to the day, the Soviet Union and the United States brought the world to the edges of the abyss. However, as the tensions had reached the boiling point in Washington, Moscow, and countless other world capitals, a moment of clarity arose in realization of the need to diminish the occurrence of such threats,” he said.

In the midst of the crisis, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev proposed to U.S. President John F. Kennedy a resolution to the Cuban Missile Crisis in a “‘parallel fashion’ with the cessation of nuclear tests. This was an opportunity, he said, to ‘present humanity with a fine gift,’” Tóth said. “It was clear then as it is today, that nuclear testing poisons the natural and political environment.”

For his part, U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon told nations that are outside the fold of the test ban treaty, “You are failing to live up to your responsibility as a member of the international community.”

At the meeting, Pulitzer Prize-winner Richard Rhodes, author of the play “Reykjavik”, described the risk of nuclear extinction as human-made and said that a human-made solution could be found, as the Reykjavik summit had demonstrated in 1986. ➡

Recalling that In Reykjavik, Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev had come close to an agreement to abolish their nuclear arsenals, Rhodes said, “A nuclear-weapon free world is not a utopian dream.”

During his encounter with the Japanese media at the sidelines of the General Assembly meeting, the Japanese foreign minister stressed the need for an accelerated monitoring system. His is the only nation which actually faced massive destruction of life as a result of nuclear bombing by the United States in 1945.

While both Iran and North Korea came under scathing criticism for their nuclear-related activities, no one spoke about Israel, India and Pakistan, three nations that possess hundreds of nuclear weapons and have shown no intent to join the CTBT.

Nor was there any discussion of reports that the U.S. is engaged in modernising its nuclear weapons.

Records show that in the five decades before the CTBT, over 2,000 nuclear tests shook and irradiated the Earth. The post-CTBT world saw only a handful of nuclear tests: those by India and Pakistan in 1998 and North Korea in 2006 and 2009.

The treaty bans all nuclear explosions by everyone, everywhere: on the Earth’s surface, in the atmosphere, in outer space, underwater and underground. In particular, it stresses the need for the continued reduction of nuclear weapons worldwide with the ultimate goal of their elimination.

The preamble recognises that a CTBT will constitute an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation by “constraining the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons.”

It further recognises that a test ban will constitute “a meaningful step in the realization of a systematic process to achieve nuclear disarmament.”

Under Article VII, each state-party has the right to propose amendments to the treaty after its entry into force. Any proposed amendment requires the approval of a simple majority of states-parties at an amendment conference with no party casting a negative vote.

Asked for their views on the amendment process relating to the so-called “peaceful nuclear explosions”, the foreign ministers from Australia, Japan, and Indonesia seemed to have no answer. They all looked each other and kept silent.

The Australian foreign minister, Bob Carr, however, later told IPS that he would “check into it”.

According to CTBTO preparatory commission, under Article VIII, a conference will be held 10 years after the treaty’s entry into force to review the implementation of its provisions, including the preamble. At this review conference, any state-party may request that the issue of so-called “peaceful nuclear explosions” (PNEs) be put on the agenda.

However, the CTBTO’s presumes that PNEs remain prohibited unless “certain virtually insurmountable obstacles are overcome. First, the review conference must decide without objection that PNEs may be permitted, and then an amendment to the treaty must also be approved.”

The CTBTO explains that such an amendment must also “demonstrate that no military benefits would result from such explosions. This double hurdle makes it extremely unlikely that peaceful nuclear explosions would ever be permitted under the treaty.”

According to the CTBTO, from the 1960s to the end of the 1980s, the Soviet Union and the United States in particular pursued the notion of “Peaceful Nuclear Explosions” (PNE’s) “for economic reasons, with mixed results”. Of the nearly 2,050 nuclear explosions detonated in the world between 1945 and 1996, over 150 or approximately seven percent were for peaceful purposes. [IPS - September 27, 2012] ◆

## GERMANY PLEDGES TO REVITALIZE NUKE DISARMAMENT

BY RAMESH JAURA IN BERLIN

The Geneva UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) has been turned into a talking shop because of the vested interests of a few mighty states without whose consent no genuine nuclear disarmament, not to speak of abolition of nuclear weapons, would ever be within the realm of possibility.

of 64 countries, including all nuclear weapon states, to avail of the potential of this United Nations body to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Germany took over from France the CD presidency on August 20.

The German Ambassador hit the nail of the head when he stressed that it was far from rewarding to engage in debates - as has become customary - about whether the CD was the only standing multilateral forum mandated to negotiate new agreements on disarmament and non-proliferation.

"But this is the point where I have to say that I would feel even more honoured presiding over our work if the Conference on Disarmament were actually in a state where it makes active use of this potential that is where it fulfils its own mandate.

Unfortunately, as we are all aware, for many reasons this has not been the case for well over a decade," Ambassador Hoffmann told UN Radio.

Back home in Berlin, the Foreign Office said, Germany will use the four weeks of its Presidency (August 20 to 14 September 14) "to breathe new life into the work of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and in particular to sound out possibilities for rapidly starting negotiations on a treaty banning the production and transfer of fissile material (FMCT)".



FMCT is a proposed international treaty to ban the further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. The treaty has not been negotiated and its terms remain to be defined.

The world's two leading nuclear powers, the United States and Russia differ on defining the fissile material. The United States maintains that fissile material includes high-enriched uranium and plutonium, except plutonium that is over 80% Pu-238.

According to a proposal by Russia, fissile material would be limited to weapons-grade uranium (with more than 90% U-235) and plutonium (with more than 90% Pu-239).

But neither proposal would prohibit the production of fissile material for non-weapons purposes, including use in civil or naval nuclear reactors.

It is not surprising, therefore, that in recent years, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament has failed to launch any new treaty negotiations. One reason for this is that the Conference's decisions are not taken by majority, but by consensus. Due to individual member states' veto power, the Conference's efforts have been hampered since 1996.

Subsequently, no major progress has so far been achieved on the four core issues: FMCT, prevention of an arms race in outer space, nuclear disarmament and negative security assurances for non-nuclear weapon states.

It was with this in view that, concluding the CD Presidency of France, Ambassador Jean-Hugues Simon-Michel expressed regret that the Conference had still not been able to reach consensus on a programme of

work. However, during the thematic discussions many members had expressed their views "in an interactive manner", he added.

The Geneva Conference on Disarmament was established in 1979 as the United Nations' central and permanent forum for disarmament. It succeeded other Geneva-based negotiating fora, which include the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1960), the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1962-68), and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (1969-78).

CD is the world's single permanent, multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, and meets in an annual session for 24 weeks, divided into three parts. Germany has assumed CD's Presidency after ten years. It will conclude the meetings in 2012.

German Foreign Office sources said: "The German Government is energetically pressing for disarmament and arms control. Together with its partners it has repeatedly developed initiatives to overcome the dead end in Geneva. Most recently, Germany and the Netherlands jointly organized a series of events dealing with the technical preparations for an FMCT.

"Federal Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle has repeatedly pointed out the necessity of nuclear disarmament and advocated negotiations on a ban on the production of fissile material. In this respect, the Geneva negotiations play a key role.

### **Negotiations stalled**

"The Group of Friends of Disarmament and Non Proliferation, whose ten members include Germany, has time and again called for a revitalizing of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament and for the start of negotiations on a ban on the production of fissile material. However, to date these efforts have failed because of the obstructionist stance of some Conference members." The Conference participants

very well know what is at stake. But vested interests have stalled the negotiations.

The on-going session of the Conference has on table a background note prepared by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons, including radiological weapons.

The issue was first presented to the UN General Assembly in 1969 by Malta, and the Conference on Disarmament was consequently tasked with considering the implications of possible military applications of laser technology.

In 1975 the then Soviet Union tabled a draft international agreement in the General Assembly on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons.

However Western States, while supporting efforts to ban particular weapons of mass destruction, objected to the conclusion of a comprehensive convention banning unspecified future weapons. During the 1980s a subsidiary body on radiological weapons considered a number of working papers but no consensus emerged.

As the outgoing Conference president Ambassador Simon-Michel pointed out, since 1993 there has been no subsidiary body. In 2002 Germany tabled a discussion paper for revisiting the issue in light of new threats. But discussions since then have remained inconclusive.

Ambassador Simon-Michel also outlined the history of a comprehensive programme on disarmament, an item which has been on the Conference's agenda since 1980 but has not been considered as requiring a subsidiary body since 1989. Views differ on whether nuclear disarmament could be conceived without parallel disarmament progress taking place in other areas such as radiological, biological and chemical weapons, with some States saying it should not be conditional on negotiations in other areas.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

According to the Conference documents, some States have outlined in the on-going session the catastrophic danger that transfers of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors and terrorists could entail, while one (unnamed) State highlighted new types of information and communication technologies which were capable of undermining stability and security just as much as weapons of mass destruction.

India - which is a nuclear power without being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty - favours a Comprehensive Programme on Disarmament that should consider not only nuclear disarmament but also other weapons and weapon systems which are crucial for maintaining international peace and security.

The principles of such a programme should be universally applicable and relevant, and in that regard the Conference would play a leading role as the world's sole multilateral forum on disarmament, India argues. But India and Pakistan - two South Asian nuclear rivals - are at daggers drawn when it comes to achieving a consensus. [Read Halting Pakistan-India Nuclear Arms Race.]

France argues that general and complete disarmament under effective international control is the ultimate goal of the Conference, and

an agenda item frequently used by the General Assembly. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is something to which France was especially attached.

But, the French representative at the on-going CD session said, nuclear disarmament could not be conceived without parallel disarmament progress taking place in other areas such as radiological, biological and chemical weapons, nor overall independence of the strategic context.

He added: "For over 30 years France had made efforts towards humanitarian disarmament - treaties which aimed to prevent or disrupt production of weapons which caused certain harm to humans - and was very attached to those, and called for its universalization.

France also called for the universalization of The Hague's Code of Conduct against the proliferation of ballistic missiles and stressed the importance of that instrument to promote transparency of ballistic missiles."

[IDN-InDepthNews - August 27, 2012] ◆



UN Conference on Disarmament, Geneva

<http://www.unog.ch/>

## HALTING PAKISTAN-INDIA NUCLEAR ARMS RACE

BY J C SURESH IN TORONTO

The two long-time South Asian rivals, India and Pakistan, are engaged in the world's most active nuclear arms race. India is estimated to have produced as many as 100 atomic weapons, and Pakistan is believed to have stockpiled a similar number if not more.

But, according to nuclear analysts, Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, Islamabad is understood to be increasing its stockpile of warhead-grade nuclear material at a faster rate than any other country; it could in fact reach as many as 200 weapons over the next decade.

Added to this is the fact that years of talks between Pakistan and India on incremental military and nuclear confidence-building measures (CBM) have failed to prevent a regional weapons race and occasional flare-ups in bilateral relations.

India and Pakistan have agreed to alert each other subsequent to any atomic mishap. The countries have also promised not to attack each other's nuclear installations and once a year exchange secret lists of such sites. But those limited assurances have not stopped the two sides from continuing the arms race.

Earlier this year India carried out a highly publicized maiden trial launch of its Agni 5 ballistic missile, which has a strike range approaching that of an ICBM.

The Indian military is also understood to be about a year away from wielding its first nuclear-armed ballistic missile submarine. Once the INS Arihant begins sea patrols, India would have a full nuclear triad, giving the country an ability to launch atomic armaments by land, air or sea.



The Pakistani army has also developed a number of short-range, nuclear-capable missiles that analysts believe are aimed at countering New Delhi's conventional military edge. These arms might be used if Indian military forces cross into Pakistan.

Against this backdrop, Washington officials and experts to wonder if it is "time for a new, more ambitious approach", reports Rachel Oswald, the Global Security Newswire's staff writer.

Participants at a July 31 forum at the Henry L. Stimson Center offered a number of suggestions for symbolic moves that India and Pakistan could take to reinvigorate bilateral talks and signal their multi-year peace process is now a priority.

Initial symbolic actions could include new country visits by heads of state and providing humanitarian aid to one another following regional natural disasters, they said.

"Instead of trying to build slowly toward something, you try to make a fundamental change in the baseline," said Toby Dalton, deputy director of the Carnegie Endowment's Nuclear Policy Program, in a presentation at the forum. He defined the new approach as Indian and Pakistani government leaders prioritizing and taking on highly public and personal roles in bilateral peace negotiations.

Prospects for a lasting peace between the two long-time South Asian rivals seemed at their highest in February 1999, with the signing of the Lahore Declaration. That followed a summit by then-Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his Indian counterpart at the time, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, according to Dalton. ➡

*Image: Indian and Pakistani national flags | Credit: paktribune.com*

As Oswald points out, in the Lahore agreement, New Delhi and Islamabad committed for the first time to giving each other advance notification of ballistic missile tests and to holding bilateral talks on options for improving mutual trust over conventional military and nuclear weapons issues. The accord was a relief for the region and the United States, which had been alarmed by the two nations' atomic tests the year before.

### The Lahore process

"The Lahore process was the apex of the CBM effort to date. It seemed like it had the potential to really shift the paradigm in a real way," said Dalton. However, just three months after the Lahore summit, Pakistani troops crossed into the Indian-controlled section of Kashmir. The ensuing short war led to a breakdown in bilateral relations and a renewed focus by both parties on weapons development.

Conventional and nuclear CBM talks since that time have largely been the domain of midlevel officials, as Pakistani and Indian government leaders have largely chosen to focus on economic affairs, according to Dalton.

The Carnegie nuclear expert believes that because South Asian leaders have not taken a great personal interest in CBM steps, the matter has been left to "risk-adverse bureaucrats" and "negotiations become an end in themselves rather than the beginning of something more meaningful."

Dalton said that some positive gains have been achieved through the two countries' multiyear peace process: increased bilateral trade, regular use of a military hotline, and adherence to a ballistic missile launch-notification mechanism.

The Global Security Newswire stresses that the India-Pakistan peace process focuses on simultaneously addressing divisive issues such as terrorism, the status of Kashmir, disputed natural resources, and nuclear weapons. It was most recently halted following the November

2008 terrorist attacks on the Indian city of Mumbai by Pakistani-based extremists. The talks were not revived until 2011.

The composite dialogue in the past has included discussions focused on reducing the prospects of a strategic miscalculation that leads to the use of nuclear weapons.

"One State Department official with regional expertise, speaking on condition of not being named, said there are 'lots of dance moves to pick from' that could stabilize the India-Pakistan security relationship. The official, who was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter, did not specify what those actions could be," writes Global Security Newswire's staff writer Oswald.

"The two sides differ over whether conventional and nuclear confidence-building measures should be discussed under the same umbrella," says Oswald. "There is recognition ... on one side that those issues are intrinsically related and a belief by the other that they are separate and need to be kept separate," the State official said.

According to analysts, India, which is the conventionally stronger military power, is seen to favour keeping the nuclear dialogue separate and insulated from other developments. Pakistan, on the other hand, views nuclear and conventional military issues as directly tied together. An argument in favour of separating the two is that should another crisis erupt, communication between the nations on atomic issues would not be cut off, thus lessening the chances of a costly miscalculation.

There is also a concern about involved parties wearying of CBM talks. "These discussions have been going on a long time back and forth," the State Department official said.

India reportedly was prepared at a CBM meeting in December 2011 to include cruise missile launches in the nations' years-old advance notification regime. Pakistan, however, wished to condition its assent to that step upon winning concessions on separate matters with New

Delhi, according to Dalton. Ultimately no deal was announced that would expand prelaunch notifications to include cruise missiles.

### Hybrid approach

Former U.S. Ambassador to Pakistan Wendy Chamberlin told forum participants a "hybrid approach" that includes both incremental CBM measures and high-profile, politically symbolic steps makes more sense.

Chamberlin, currently president of the Middle East Institute, noted grand gestures such as the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's historic 1977 visit to Israel. That trip resulted two years later in a peace treaty that still stands today between the two nations.

Yet such steps are not sufficient by themselves in South Asia if there is not accompanying domestic buy-in, Chamberlin said. Any Pakistani leader who attempted to strike a far-reaching deal with India would have to have the support of Pakistan's powerful military, she said.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has proposed visiting Pakistan before the year is over. Such a trip would be a "good symbolic move," said Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asian Affairs Geoffrey Pyatt. Other important gestures could involve Islamabad permitting Indian products to travel through Pakistan on their way to Afghanistan. Islamabad thus far has been wary of India's growing involvement in Kabul affairs.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee staffer Michael Phelan cautioned that incremental, trust-enforcing actions were necessary to sustain interest and resources toward the peace process. "The symbolic element is not what will sustain it," he said.

Noting it would take a desire by both nations for a lasting peace, or "two to tango," Stimson Center South Asia program director Michael Krepon suggested one country should take on the principal role in peace efforts. He did not specify whether that should fall to India or Pakistan.

"Tangos look pretty ugly when both parties are trying to lead", Krepon said. "You need a leader but you also need a follower. You need someone strong enough to follow."

Pyatt added that "economic drivers are absolutely essential" to strengthening and broadening the India-Pakistan peace dialogue.

"Probably the most strategic shift since 1998 is the shift that has taken place in attitudes toward commercial engagement," he said. Both nations now recognize there are substantial economic gains to be had by greater cross-border trade, as well as "opportunity costs for both countries for failure to move ahead on that," Pyatt said.

Dalton said he does not see much room for the United States to play the role of peace arbitrator in South Asia, as it has attempted to do in the Middle East peace process. This is largely because Washington is "not a trusted actor in Pakistan" and is viewed as too favourably tilted toward India, he said.

"Our declared even handed policy is not really seen as even handed. The United States, particularly over the last 10 years, has shifted toward India," Chamberlin agreed. This worries Pakistan, making it more insecure and less likely to take the big-risk steps needed for lasting peace, she said.

Instead of Washington, the International Atomic Energy Agency through its auspices as a facilitator of regional atomic safety training sessions, could play a key role in normalizing India-Pakistan security relations, Dalton suggested. This could be done by bringing scientists from both sides together with the common purpose of averting an atomic disaster in South Asia.

"Both India and Pakistan seem to trust the IAEA more than they seem to trust any other country," he asserted. Dalton pointed to the experiences of Russian and U.S. scientists cooperatively working together following the collapse of the Soviet Union to lock down vulnerable nuclear weapons and materials. [IDN - August 8, 2012] ◆



## WEAPONS INTO PLOUGHSHARES AND CRISES INTO OPPORTUNITY

VIEWPOINT BY SERGIO DUARTE\* IN NEW YORK

The crisis that started a few years ago with the collapse of major financial institutions in the United States is now centred in Europe and threatens other parts of the world.

Many emerging countries in Asia and Latin America that had thus far avoided contamination because of their sound economic and fiscal policies and their timely adoption of domestic consumption stimulus packages are now beginning to experience secondary effects.

Despite the current financial turmoil and uncertainty, hundreds of millions of dollars continue to be spent each day on military operations without any apparent success in solving the problems they were supposed to. Other disquieting signs loom large.

Although combat operations in some troubled areas are being discontinued, the root causes of tension remain unaddressed, with unpredictable consequences.

As formerly all-powerful war-bent nations feel constrained to pull back into their own territories, new financial resources are nevertheless earmarked in their budgets for designing, testing, and eventually producing and deploying new generations of deadly weapons in the name of maintaining their national security.

By the same token, a few others seem determined to devote a considerable percentage of their scarce national resources to achieve means of destruction to counter real or imagined threats from abroad.

The "contagious doctrine of deterrence", as Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon once described it, is no longer an exclusive feature of the two antagonists of the Cold War. If some nations feel entitled to possess a



nuclear "insurance policy" as a former prime minister described his country's atomic arsenal- there is no reason to expect that others will not follow suit if they deem it necessary.

It is unfortunate that the days when international conferences could succeed in hammering out bilateral or multilateral arms control agreements seem to be over. Even if past agreements did not bring about effective disarmament, at least they preserved a degree of sanity by curbing some of the most dangerous aspects of the arms race and by signalling the possibility of further progress toward disarmament.

For over fifteen years now the multilateral machinery put together by the United Nations over many decades has been unable to achieve the slightest headway towards any significant agreement on both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Mankind seems to have lost the ability or the will to follow up on the progress previously achieved in banning other types of weapons of mass destruction, namely chemical and biological arms.

Despite important reductions in the number of nuclear weapons since Cold War peaks, there has been little, if any, progress towards their actual elimination or even the reduction of their importance in the military doctrines of the countries that hold them. The world continues to devote increasing resources to the production of conventional weapons, a large number of which find their way to illegal brokers to feed conflicts in the least developed areas, severely jeopardising chances of improving the lot of their populations. ➡

*\*Sergio Duarte is a former Brazilian diplomat. His last position was as United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA).*

At last count, world expenditures on armaments reached some 1.7 trillion dollars possibly as much as the industrialised nations have already spent to prop up their financial situation.

All is not lost, however - at least not yet. Analysts have remarked that every real advance in the interaction among nations has been the product a deep crisis in international relations. In recent history, landmark international achievements have been preceded by major conflicts, immense destruction, and severe strife. That was the case of the Hague Conferences, the creation of the ill-fated League of Nations, and the successful establishment of the United Nations.

But mankind does not have to wait for a major war or a similar catastrophe to occur. Whatever progress has been achieved in the past few decades came as a result of the timely perception that something had to be done before real disaster struck.

That was the case of the realisation that the insane buildup of ever more deadly nuclear arsenals by the two superpowers had to cease, that proliferation had to be curbed, that at least the most harmful and indiscriminate conventional weapons had to be banned, and that



Opening of the Exhibition entitled "Putting an End to Nuclear Explosions" by Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) From left to right: Michael Douglas, Marty Natalegawa, Ban Ki-moon, Taïeb Fassi-Fihri and Sergio de Queiroz Duarte on May 4, 2010  
Credit: Eskinder Debebe - Wikimedia Commons

ways must be found to ensure that the power of the atom is used exclusively for peaceful purposes to name just a few examples.

The combined effect of the current financial crisis and of the deadlock in international structures dealing with security, disarmament, development, and the environment can yet lead to new realisations. Wealthy nations, for instance, are already well aware that their own prosperity and well-being, just like natural resources, may not last forever. They should therefore join forces with poorer ones to find wise solutions for the benefit of all.

The most heavily armed nations should realise that converting their territories into fortresses while building ever more sophisticated means of destruction will not enhance their security but rather endanger it.

Stern fiscal policies could trigger significant reductions in military budgets worldwide. Perhaps most importantly, all nations, regardless of their wealth and political or military might, should finally understand that any crisis can be defused if they are able to work together in an international system that recognises that World War II and the Cold War are definitively over. It is not too late.

[IPS | August 6, 2012] ♦

## GOVTS BOOST NUKES WHILE CUTTING AID, SOCIAL SERVICES

BY HAIDER RIZVI IN NEW YORK

As U.N.-led talks on disarmament resumed in Geneva on July 30, calls were growing for nuclear-armed nations to cut spending on their stockpiles and instead divert resources to development.

“The amount still being spent on nuclear arms makes no sense, just as continued reliance on the weapons themselves makes no sense,” David Kreiger, president of the U.S.-based Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, told IPS.

His remarks alluded to the fact that nine out of 193 U.N. member states continue to increase budgetary allocations for the maintenance and modernisation of nuclear weapons, despite promises to reduce their stockpiles.

Last year, the nuclear states spent around 105 billion dollars on their arsenals, according to independent estimates. The share of the United States alone was 61 billion dollars.

According to a recent study by Global Zero, a U.S.-based disarmament advocacy group, in 2011, Russia spent 14.9 billion dollars; China 7.6 billion; France 6.0 billion; and Britain 5.5 billion dollars on nuclear weapons.



For their part, the four de-facto nuclear powers also demonstrated a similar pattern of behaviour with increased expenditures on nuclear weapons. India spent 4.9 billion, Pakistan 2.2 billion, Israel 1.9 billion and North Korea 0.7 billion dollars.

This cost calculation by Globe Zero refers only to researching, developing, procuring, testing, operating, maintaining, and upgrading the nuclear arsenal, not many other related activities. Global predicts the expenditures will most likely be the same this year.

That despite the fact that most governments continue to face financial constraints caused by the prolonged economic downturn and seem inclined to introduce further cuts in social services.

Considering that millions of people across the world suffer from hunger, disease and homelessness, Kreiger calls this trend to boost spending on nukes “obscene”. “Nuclear weapons absorb resources that could be used instead to fulfill the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),” he said. ➡

*Photo: Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev after signing the "New START" treaty in Prague on April 8, 2010 | Wikimedia Commons*

U.N. experts say they want to raise over 400 billion dollars annually for development. But that amount is becoming increasingly hard to secure because most leading donor nations are not fulfilling their commitments.

### **Dangerously Weak, Warns Report**

According to the U.N., there is a shortfall of 167 billion dollars in Official Development Assistance, which is making it hard for developing countries to achieve all the MDGs by the deadline of 2015. That shortfall can be easily overcome by introducing drastic cuts in the cost of nuclear weapons maintenance and modernisation, according to peace activists.

“The nuclear-armed nations are spending around 300 million every day on their nuclear forces,” said Tim Wright of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons in a statement. “Obviously, there is a better way to spend this money than on weapons that threaten us all.”

Currently, the nuclear states are estimated to possess about 19,500 nuclear weapons, according to Critical Will, a non-governmental organisation that works with the U.N. closely on matters related to nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

Despite the new START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) treaty signed in 2010, both the United States and Russia continue to update their existing arsenals. So is the case with Britain, France and China, as well as the four other de-facto nuclear powers.

While the five declared nuclear powers’ spending records are hard to pin down due to lack of transparency in certain areas, researchers say it is much harder to find accurate data with regard to nuclear weapons’ spending in de facto nuclear countries. In the case of Pakistan, for example, which remains outside the fold of the Nuclear Non-

Proliferation Treaty, there is no public accountability regarding the cost of nuclear weapons. It’s a state secret.

“I don’t know,” replied a Pakistani diplomat recently, in response to a question about the cost of his country’s nuclear programme. “Why don’t you talk to the U.S. diplomats and others? Are they telling their people how much money they are spending?”

His answer implied that figures made public by the declared nuclear states are not authentic either. But peace activists from the region counter this argument.

“All nuclear armed states launched their weapons programmes without the knowledge of their own people. This secrecy about what goes on inside nuclear programmes and how much they cost in public funds is an attempt to escape accountability,” said Zia Mian, who directs a project on peace and security at Princeton University.

“The first victims of the nuclear programmes are the people they are supposed to protect,” he told IPS, citing recent data which shows that Pakistan spends one percent of its GNP on health and education.

About half of the country’s population cannot read or write.

Kreiger said the failure of the leaders of the nuclear weapons states “to rid the world of these weapons displays nothing less than cruel indifference to those who suffer, while at the same time assuring that their own citizens remain targets of nuclear weapons.”

The U.N. disarmament conference will conclude on Sep. 14. The 65-member body, which reports to the U.N. General Assembly annually, sets its own agenda and works by consensus.

In the past, the conference has negotiated some major international agreements, including the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. [IPS - July 27, 2012] ♦

## WILL AUSTERITY PROMPT NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT?

BY JULIO GODOY FROM PARIS

The changing international political order and a dramatic budgetary situation at home are forcing France to consider giving up the extremely expensive nuclear arsenal the country has maintained since the late 1950s.

To make this pressing necessity appear as a virtue, some French political leaders and analysts are attempting to posit the move as a step towards international efforts to update the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and reduce global nuclear arsenals.

But the simple truth is that the French government, facing a major budgetary crisis, can no longer afford to maintain a costly armoury that, as former minister of defence, Paul Quilès, put it, “isn’t supposed to be fired in the first place”.

Former prime minister Michel Rocard, a member of the ruling Socialist Party (SP), inadvertently opened the debate in mid-June during a television interview with the Paris-based broadcaster BFM in which he stated that by giving up its nuclear cache, “France would save 16 billion euros per year, and renounce a completely useless weapon.”

Later, Rocard called his statements “a joke”, and argued that discussing nuclear disarmament was “such a serious issue, that if you want to question it, you have to do it cautiously, and give yourself time to discuss it and to listen to serious arguments.”

But jokes aside, Rocard’s statement provoked an avalanche of debate without a definitive conclusion. For the time being, Socialist President Francois Hollande has denied that his government has any intention of renouncing the nuclear weapon in the foreseeable future.



Hollande’s position is based on the old argument that nuclear power grants France an exceptional, albeit delusory, political status, placing it on a par with the other four permanent members of the United Nations security council: Britain, China, Russia, and the U.S.A.

Without the nuclear weapon, France would be reduced to its actual geopolitical role: of a middle-range power, battered by economic mediocrity and a volatile domestic climate.

“The end of the Cold War and the grand strategic mutations taking place right now (necessitate) a redefinition of the role of the nuclear arsenal in (France’s) global power considerations, and in our policy of national security,” Pascal Boniface, director of the Paris-based Institute for International and Strategic Studies, told IPS.

But Boniface warned, “If France were to renounce the nuclear weapon it would certainly degrade its credibility as an international power and provoke its own demotion on strategic affairs.”

Boniface recalled, “When Charles de Gaulle (in the late 1950s) decided to equip France with a nuclear arsenal, his objective was to maintain our country as a global power, along with the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union.”

In other words, for De Gaulle’s France, the nuclear weapon was more a geopolitical emblem than a military necessity. In a cryptic way, De Gaulle admitted as much, in an official statement issued in December 1961, at the height of the Cold War. ➡

*Photo: President Hollande | Wikimedia Commons*

“In ten years’ time, we might need to kill 80 million Russian citizens,” De Gaulle said. “I believe that (the Soviet Union) wouldn’t attack somebody able to kill 80 million Russians, even if the (Soviets) themselves were able to kill 800 million French (citizens).”

### France’s economic woes

Fifty years later, with memories of the Cold War fading into the realm of a bad nightmare, the possibility of having to kill 80 million Russians is as unthinkable as ever. France’s new national nightmare is the sovereign debt crisis, and a deteriorating economic performance in the international arena.

Hollande’s government, in office since mid-June, is this year facing an unexpected budgetary shortfall of up to 10 billion euros, on top of the previously anticipated deficit of 4.4 percent of the gross national product (GNP).

In a report released on Jul. 2, the country’s general accounting office warned that France would have to raise taxes and reduce expenses to meet the high deficit of 4.4 percent originally foreseen by Hollande’s predecessor, Nicolas Sarkozy.

According to European Commission figures, in 2013 France will have to increase revenues or reduce expenses by 24 billion euros to limit the deficit to three percent.

To add insult to injury, leading French enterprises, such as carmaker Peugeot, have announced massive layoffs and major industrial facility relocations abroad.

Hollande is thus left with a staggering political challenge: to simultaneously salvage state finances and support French industry to endure the present economic downturn and prepare a more competitive fu-

ture. According to various analysts and politicians, the temptation to reduce useless spending - especially on a purely symbolic nuclear arsenal - and instead invest in more rational endeavours, has never been greater.

Quilés, former chair of the parliamentary defence commission, told IPS that the “nuclear weapon is an expensive absurdity.” He dismissed arguments that the nuclear weapon constituted a “life insurance” for France. “It is more a death insurance,” he said.

He believes the costs of the French nuclear arsenal will most certainly increase in the immediate future, given the necessity to update weapons and procure expensive supplementary equipment, such as military submarines.

Retired general Bernard Norlain, head of the military cabinet at the prime minister’s office between 1986 and 1992, also called for nuclear disarmament.

“The arguments in favour of nuclear (arms) were pertinent at the time of the Cold War, but the global strategic situation has changed radically since 1990,” he told IPS. “We cannot continue arguing the same way as in the 1980s.”

Norlain, who has rallied behind the international project Global Zero that calls for a world without nuclear weapons, noted regretfully that Hollande appears to be bowing to pressure to maintain a useless asset.

“Hollande’s declarations on the matter are extremely conformist,” Norlain pointed out. But other military experts, who asked not be identified, said that no head of state would choose to go down in history as the one who unilaterally erased France’s status as a nuclear power. [IPS - July 18, 2012] ◆

## NEW INITIATIVE TO COMBAT TOXIC THREATS

BY ISABELLE DE GRAVE IN NEW YORK

Reducing the risks associated with chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) threats is the goal of a new multi-country initiative known as the Centres of Excellence (CoE).

The United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), representatives of the European Union and CBRN experts are launching a joint CoE, which seeks to improve policies and unite countries across the globe against CBRN risks.

In response to increasing concerns over criminal misuse of CBRN materials and the threat of industrial catastrophe among other risks, CoEs are being set up in Kenya, Algeria, Morocco, Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Georgia, Uzbekistan and the Philippines, and will draw on input from more than 60 countries around the world.

Currently, many countries would find themselves isolated in the event of a crisis. CoEs aim to develop partnerships between regions to share the risks of CBRN incidents and improve their capacity to protect civilian populations, explained Francesco Marelli, UNICRI CBRN programme manager.

Bruno Dupré, European Diplomatic Service policy coordinator for CBRN issues, explained that the regional secretariats being established in each region seek to mobilise local communities - the judiciary, police force, and military personnel - to develop and share knowledge on specific risks and threats.

Amid growing global concern about the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) the CoE initiative's first two pilot projects are aimed at countering illicit nuclear trafficking and the threat of nuclear and radiological terrorism.

Since 1998, in the U.S. alone there have been more than 1,300 reported incidents of lost, stolen, or abandoned devices containing

sealed radioactive sources, an average of about 250 per year, according to a January 2011 CBRN case study submitted to the European Union.

Project Geiger, a joint initiative between the international police organisation INTERPOL and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), with the aim of gathering comprehensive data on the illicit traffic in nuclear and radiological materials has also recorded more than 2,200 cases of trafficking, according to the study.

The CoE projects are aimed at mitigating the risk posed by illicit trafficking through capacity building in nuclear forensics in the Southeast Asia region. They incorporate issues such as the safe retrieval of nuclear material, measures to protect the public and management of the crime scene to allow for prosecution.

In response to questions regarding the threat of weapons of mass destruction in Syria spreading outside the country, Dupré emphasised that CoE was primarily a preventative initiative not to be confused with a permanent institution or crisis response organisation.

Whilst CoE seek to prevent crises through addressing structural issues - early warning and early assistance systems - coordinating a response to scattering weaponry in conflict situations in the Middle East and North Africa region was deemed beyond its mandate. With the threat of nuclear terrorism attracting the most widespread concerns, projects addressing other chemical and biological concerns are slower to materialise.

The disposal of electronic waste (e-waste) has been made a priority in the Africa region, where toxic properties contained in electrical equipment, including laptops and mobile phones, present severe health hazards to those working daily to dispose of them.

[IPS - June 27, 2012] ◆

## ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY DANGEROUSLY WEAK, WARNS REPORT

BY CAREY L. BIRON IN WASHINGTON

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is “significantly underfunded”, warns a new report released here on June 25.

The agency is labouring under a three-decade-old budget cap that, the report says, is significantly hampering the organisation’s ability to function at the necessary level.

Under several of its mandates, the IAEA is the only organisation in the world tasked with such oversight. It remains entirely funded by voluntary contributions from its member states.

“In spite of (a) well-deserved reputation and its apparently starry prospects, the Agency remains relatively undernourished, its powers significantly hedged and its technical achievements often overshadowed by political controversy,” warns the report, released by the Centre for International Governance Innovation (CIGI), a Canadian think tank.

Currently, the IAEA’s regular budget stands at 321 million euros (around 400 million dollars), which pays for a staff of around 2,300.

“This is tiny, considering what it does,” the report’s author, Trevor Findlay, said on Monday at the Washington offices of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

What that budget currently does, according to Findlay’s research, is oversee nuclear safeguards at 949 facilities in 175 countries, as of 2010. That same year alone, the organisation engaged in more than 2,100 on-site inspections.

Indeed, the IAEA has garnered surprisingly widespread accolades since its creation in 1953. At the same time, much of this praise has inher-



ently acknowledged the agency’s relative budgetary limitations, choosing to laud its efficiency.

In 2006, the U.S. government office tasked with assisting the president create the federal budget gave the IAEA a perfect score in terms of its value for money. In 2004, a U.N. panel cited the agency as an “extraordinary bargain”.

Yet while Findlay notes that the IAEA has repeatedly been called out as “one of the better-run agencies in the U.N. system”, he warns that the organisation’s capped budget is having negative ramifications across its several mandates.

### Zero real growth

The funding problems stem from a United Nations-wide policy instituted during the mid-1980s called zero real growth, which halted budgets from growing beyond the median rate of inflation. This came about due to pressure from the so-called Geneva Group, comprised of the largest contributing countries to the U.N.

In the IAEA’s case, this policy essentially froze the budget until 2003, when small though incremental increases were made to the agency’s budget, particularly as a result of U.S. pressure.

Indeed, in this regard the United States remains one of the agency’s most powerful proponents, with President Barack Obama having pushed to double the IAEA’s budget and significantly raising the U.S.’s own voluntary contributions.

Even as its budget has remained stuck, the IAEA has been called on to take on a growing spectrum of responsibilities. Further, the agency’s



own estimates suggest a doubling of nuclear power over the next 20 years.

Inevitably, these budgetary constraints have had wide-ranging ramifications, Findlay reports. He calls for a shift to a needs-based budgeting system, in order to support the full range of activities in which the agency has become involved.

“The Agency has not been provided with the latest technologies and adequate human resources,” the report notes. “Most alarming of all, the Agency has failed, by its own means, to detect serious non-compliance by Iraq, Iran and Libya with their safeguards agreements.”

A particular wake-up call came surrounding the disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant in March 2011, following which the agency was proved unable to respond for more than 24 hours.

For many observers, this highlighted not only a dangerous failing within the IAEA, but also the continued lack of any other international body to take on the mantle of the world’s “hub” on nuclear safety.

### **Political obstacles**

For many, the Fukushima and ongoing Iran issues have highlighted the critical need for a re-examination of the IAEA’s functioning.

“After years of crucial Agency involvement with Iran, that country is closer to acquiring nuclear weapons than ever before,” the report states, with Finlay expressing anxiety over the IAEA’s lack of capacity to deal with protracted issues of non-compliance.

But rectifying the budgetary issues is only part of the overall problem, he says. His report, based on two years of work, offers 20 recommendations, broken down by the range of actors that would be expected to make the changes.

Of these recommendations, the Iran issue particularly highlights the fact that the IAEA’s governance has become dangerously divisive, particularly in recent years.

“Politicisation has debilitated the agency’s governing bodies,” Finlay says, noting that cases involving non-compliance have proven to be particularly incapacitating. He puts this down particularly to the Iran stalemate, though he also cites contentious votes on Israel’s nuclear programme, safeguards throughout the Middle East and other issues.

“Increasing politicization may be partly attributed to the more active role of the developing countries in Agency affairs,” the report suggests. It points to the increased heft of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a bloc that purportedly functions as Iran’s “diplomatic bulwark”.

Yet the report hastens to add that “the West is also guilty of politicizing the IAEA ... Nicholas Burns, US undersecretary of state for political affairs, reportedly told (former IAEA chief Mohamed) ElBaradei, in pressing him to toe the US line on Iran, that ‘we pay 25 percent of your budget.’”

While the report offers a few strategies for attenuating this divisiveness, Finlay is clear that the intrusion of politics is also inevitable. Given that it is the member states that established and pay for the IAEA’s services, he concludes that “it is they that ultimately control its destiny.”

“(The IAEA) can in some respects strengthen and reform itself. But ultimately, it is constrained by the strong preferences of its membership as a whole or those of key, active member states. It is therefore to the member states that we must look to trigger and sustain lasting strengthening and reform.” [IPS - June 25, 2012] ♦

## FEWER BUT NEWER NUCLEAR ARMS DEEMED FUTURE THREAT

BY THALIF DEEN IN NEW YORK

The best way to eliminate the nuclear threat anywhere is by eliminating nuclear weapons everywhere,” says Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who is increasingly viewed as one of the strongest opponents of nuclear arms.

But the lingering hopes of eliminating the nuclear threat keep receding: talks with Iran are deadlocked, North Korea continues its testing, and the politics of the Arab uprisings threaten to derail an international conference on a nuclear weapons-free zone in the Middle East, scheduled to take place in Finland in December.

In spite of the world’s revived interest in disarmament efforts, none of the eight nuclear weapon-possessing states - the United States, Britain, France, China, Russia, India, Pakistan and Israel - shows more than a rhetorical willingness to give up their nuclear arsenals just yet, according to the latest Yearbook 2012 released Monday by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

“While the overall number of nuclear warheads may be decreasing, the long-term modernization programmes under way in these states suggest that nuclear weapons are still a currency of international status and power,” says Shannon Kile, senior researcher at the SIPRI Programme on Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-Proliferation.

Asked if a nuclear weapons-free world was just a good try in a long lost cause, Kile told IPS: “Well, I am an optimist by nature, but I think we need to be realistic in understanding that achieving a nuclear weapon-free world is a very long-term goal.

“As we report in the SIPRI Yearbook, all of the nuclear weapon-possessing states have force modernization or expansion programmes under way and all appear committed to retaining their nuclear arsenals for the indefinite future.”

At the same time, he said, it is a hopeful sign that top political leaders have at least begun thinking the unthinkable and are giving serious attention to formulating a long-term strategy for not only reducing the size and spread of nuclear arsenals but eventually for eliminating them altogether.

“Leaving aside current force trends, I am convinced that to ultimately reach the goal of a nuclear weapon-free world, we will have to first overcome what might called the persistence of deterrence thinking,” said Kile. “This will require us in effect to redraw our mental maps of how best to defend against 21st-century threats.”

At the end of the day, he pointed out, this actually may be the most difficult challenge of all in moving toward a world without nuclear weapons.

A London daily reported last month that a planned international conference in Helsinki in December is unraveling because of the uprisings in the Middle East and the political tug-of-war over suspected weapons programmes in both Israel and Iran. The primary objective of the conference was to work towards a Middle East free of nuclear weapons. But some of the key players, including the United States and Israel, have not confirmed their participation.

U.S. President Barack Obama warned last year that if the hidden agenda of the conference is to single out Israel, the United States will skip the meeting.

The recent uprisings in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Syria have also dramatically changed the political environment in the region.

According to the SIPRI Yearbook, world nuclear forces now have “fewer but newer nuclear weapons”. ↻

At the start of 2012 the eight nuclear states possessed approximately 4,400 operational nuclear weapons. Nearly 2,000 of these are kept in a state of high operational alert.

If all nuclear warheads are counted, these states together possess a total of approximately 19,000 nuclear weapons, as compared with 20,530 at the beginning of 2011.

The decrease, says SIPRI, is due mainly to Russia and the United States further reducing their inventories of strategic nuclear weapons under the terms of the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START) as well as retiring ageing and obsolescent weapons.

At the same time, all five legally recognised nuclear weapon states, namely China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States, are either deploying new nuclear weapon delivery systems or have announced programmes to do so. And they appear determined to retain their nuclear arsenals indefinitely.

Meanwhile, India and Pakistan continue to develop new systems capable of delivering nuclear weapons and are expanding their capacities to produce fissile material for military purposes, according to the Yearbook.

Asked why despite all the ballyhoo, North Korea isn't being considered a nuclear threat, if not now at least in the future, Kile told IPS, "As we have written in the SIPRI Yearbooks for several years, there is no publicly available information to substantiate North Korea's claim to have developed operational nuclear weapons (i.e, militarily-usable weapons that could be delivered by an aircraft or missile). "So it does not pose a military nuclear threat per se," he said, pointing out that at the same time, North Korea is clearly committed to developing nuclear weapons.

Numerous commentaries and statements coming out of Pyongyang indicate that the leadership there genuinely sees such weapons as offering a security guarantee of the last resort against a pre-emptive

attack by the United States. Indeed, North Korea continues to denounce the U.S. hostile policy and its attempts to stifle the North in order to justify its development of a nuclear deterrent.

The question now is how the international community should respond to the reality that North Korea has developed a rudimentary nuclear weapon capability and may over time produce a small arsenal of weapons, he argued.

"I think that the most plausible answer is that the international community likely will have learn to live with North Korea's nuclear fait accompli, given the absence of any realistic options for persuading the North to give up its nuclear weapon activities in a verifiable and transparent way," Kile said.

This is true even if there were to be a gradual rapprochement between North Korea and the United States. At the same time, said Kile, the international community must develop a coherent strategy for managing, or at least mitigating, the destabilising consequences arising from North Korea's nuclear weapon programme.

There is a growing consensus within the U.S. administration and among many independent analysts that the most dangerous of these consequences is the possibility that the North Korea will export fissile material, or the technology for producing it, to other countries (so-called secondary proliferation), as it allegedly did with Syria.

This in turn has led to renewed interest in putting into place enforceable measures and policies aimed at restricting North Korea's nuclear capabilities while at the same time finding a formula for reaching a negotiated solution that will address the main security concerns of the DPRK and the international community writ large, Kile declared.

Meanwhile, the SIPRI Yearbook also warns that upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa in 2011 highlighted the changing character of contemporary armed conflict, while peacekeeping operations in 2011 illustrated a growing acceptance of the concept of protection of civilians. [IPS - June 4, 2012] ♦

## NAGASAKI MAYOR CAMPAIGNS FOR A NUKE-FREE WORLD

BY JAMSHED BARUAH IN BERLIN

"I urge you all, as human beings, to consider again the inhumanity of atomic weapons," Tomihisa Taue, the Mayor of Nagasaki and Vice President of the Mayors for Peace organisation told government representatives participating in a crucial event well in time for an international conference in 2015 to review the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

Initiated in 1982 by the mayors of Japanese cities Nagasaki and Hiroshima - on which the U.S. dropped atomic bombs in August 1945 killing more than 200,000 women, children and elderly - the Mayors for Peace group comprises 5,000 cities that are home to nearly a billion people. Those who survived the first atom bombs in history suffer even now from the aftereffects of radiation.

Before the start of the First Preparatory Committee (Prepcom) for the 2015 NPT Review Conference April 30 to May 11, 2012 in Vienna, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) held a meeting on April 28-29, to strategize for the upcoming event and exchange ideas and plans. The meeting was supported by the governments of Austria and Norway and Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a Tokyo-based Buddhist organisation, wedded to the cause of a world without nuclear weapons.

In fact, Kazumi Matsui, mayor of Hiroshima, has been exploring the possibility of holding the 2015 NPT Review Conference in Hiroshima city. The merit of this proposal lies in the fact that it would bring the leaders of the nuclear powers to the first city where an atomic bomb was dropped to discuss the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Supporting the move, the Nagasaki mayor asked government representatives in the Prepcom: ". . . is there any location more appropri-



ate than Hiroshima to discuss completely eliminating the threat of nuclear weapons and creating a world without them?"

In an eminent civil society presentation to the Prepcom on May 2, 2012 in Vienna, the Nagasaki Mayor asked government representatives: "Isn't it absurd that investing the immense sum of 1.63 trillion dollars worldwide on military expenditures such as in 2010 in the name of national security has only led to a more dangerous world? Is it not time now to display the strong will required to free us from that danger?"

Taue was not being rhetorical: The Final Document emerging from the 2010 NPT Review Conference expresses deep concern for the catastrophic humanitarian consequences from any use of atomic weapons, and all States Parties unanimously reaffirmed the need to observe international law.

But debates on nuclear weapons continue to start and end with the so-called national interests, the balance of military force, and the effectiveness of military technology. "I wonder if representatives from the nuclear powers understand the true horror of nuclear weapons," said Taue.

"It is the atomic bomb survivors whose voices bring us back to seeing and discussing the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and it is imperative that all parties listen to those voices and come to understand why they appeal so desperately for a world free of nuclear weapons," he added.

Several atomic bomb survivors from Japan were in Vienna on the occasion of the First Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review

Conference. An atomic bomb exhibition was on display at the Vienna International Centre and it was also held at Vienna City Hall.

The Nagasaki city mayor's impassioned plea for "fulfilling our responsibility to pass on to future generations a world without nuclear weapons" sounds compelling for yet another reason. At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the first chairman's draft from Committee One included ground-breaking measures to obligate nuclear powers to make concrete efforts to establish a world free of nuclear weapons and to empower the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to convene a meeting as early as 2014 for the creation of a roadmap to the complete abolition of nuclear weapons.

This was inspired by Ban's 2008 five-point proposal that included a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC), and when this proposal was tabled, the world appeared to be finally getting closer to the goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons.

However, while there were references to the NWC in the Final Document, the part regarding the convening of a meeting for a roadmap was removed. Despite the clear indication of the unanimous desire for a world without nuclear weapons, no concrete timeframes or methods to this end were stated.

### **Roadmap Meeting**

Mayors for Peace is calling for immediate preliminary arrangements and the speedy convening of this roadmap meeting. In February 2012, 33 heads of state from Latin America and the Caribbean expressed their strong commitment to work on convening an international high-level conference to set forth a program in stages for the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time.

In a clarion call, Taue urged the leaders of nuclear powers to listen to the voices from civil and international society. "We urge you to make efforts at this preliminary conference to ensure that the 2015 NPT Review Conference will become the starting point for the realization of this roadmap meeting and the place to gain the consensus to conclude a Nuclear Weapons Convention. We trust that the 2015 NPT Review Conference will clearly show how and in what timeframe a world without nuclear weapons will be realized," the Nagasaki mayor added.

Such a timeframe is quite realistic. Treaties concluded among nations have created nuclear-weapon-free zones where the stationing, production, acquisition, possession, and control of nuclear weapons are prohibited. Given the political will, nuke-free zones are one concrete method towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.

There is also an agreement to hold a meeting for the establishment of such a nuclear-weapon free zone in the Middle East this year. In Northeast Asia, the international community is faced with the North Korean nuclear issue and keenly aware of the importance of establishing this nuclear-weapon-free zone. "Leaders of the world, let's work together to create more of these zones to bring us closer to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons," said Taue. He urged them to make additional efforts for nuclear disarmament as mandated in Article 6 of the NPT.

At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, 42 governments including Japan stressed the importance of arms reduction and non-proliferation education. Accordingly, the Japanese government will be holding a 'Global Forum on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education' in Nagasaki in August 2012. The Forum is expected to provide a lively debate and attendance from many NGOs, government representatives, and specialists from around the world. [IDN-InDepthNews - May 22, 2012] ◆

*Photo on page 91: Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue*

## OPPOSITION TO IRANIAN NUCLEAR ARMS WIDESPREAD: GLOBAL POLL

BY JIM LOBE IN WASHINGTON

Opposition to Iran's possible acquisition of nuclear weapons is widespread, although support for taking military action to prevent it appears to have fallen in several key countries over the past two years, according to a new poll of public opinion in 21 countries released here May 18 by the Pew Research Center's Global Attitudes Project.

The poll, some of whose questions were sharply criticised as biased by several experts, was released just five days before Iran meets with the so-called P5+1 nations - the U.S., Britain, France, China, Russia, and Germany - in Baghdad to discuss the future of its nuclear programme.

Hopes that the Baghdad meeting could produce agreement on a number of confidence-building measures, including a possible freeze by Iran of its enrichment of uranium to 20 percent, have risen since the two sides met in Istanbul in April.

The announcement in Vienna on May 18 that the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Yukiya Amano will travel to Tehran May 20 - apparently to sort out the terms for a visit by his inspectors to a military base suspected of housing a nuclear-related testing facility - has fuelled those hopes.

The poll, which was conducted between mid-March and mid-April, was part of Pew's annual series on global attitudes that has run over the last 12 years.

The latest survey questioned more than 26,000 people in 21 countries about a range of issues beyond those having to do with Iran and its nuclear programme.

Other findings by the survey are expected to be released in the coming weeks and months, but Pew released the Iran-related results in light of heightened public interest surrounding next week's meetings.

In addition to the P5+1 countries themselves, the countries covered by the poll included five other European countries - Spain, the Czech Republic, Italy, Poland, and Greece; six predominantly Muslim nations - Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Pakistan; as well as Japan, India, Brazil, and Mexico.

Critics of the survey charged that key questions about Iran's nuclear programme and what to do about it contained factual assumptions - for example, that Iran's nuclear programme is designed to develop nuclear weapons - that were themselves questionable. Tehran has steadfastly insisted - most recently by Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei - that its programme is intended for civilian uses only.

The U.S. and Israeli intelligence communities have also assessed that no decision has been taken by Iran's leadership to build a weapon, although aspects of its nuclear programme - notably its enrichment of uranium - would certainly be relevant if such a decision were taken.

In its poll, Pew found majorities ranging from 54 percent (China and Turkey) to 96 percent (Germany and France) in 18 of the countries said they were opposed to Iran "acquiring nuclear weapons". The three exceptions were Pakistan, where only 11 percent said they opposed such a development; India, where 34 percent opposed a nuclear-armed Iran, and 51 percent said they had no opinion; and Tunisia where opponents and supporters were evenly split.

When respondents who said they opposed a nuclear-armed Iran were asked how such an eventuality might be prevented, there was far less agreement.

Asked about using "tougher international economic sanctions on Iran to try to stop it from developing nuclear weapons," majorities in 16 countries ranging from 56 percent in India to 80 percent in the U.S.

and Germany said they approved. But majorities in Tunisia, Turkey, Pakistan, and, significantly, China (54 percent) disapproved, while in Russia, a slight plurality said they approved.

Particularly notable, however, was the fact that, compared to the answers to the same question two years ago, support for sanctions has generally declined, most dramatically in Russia (from 67 percent approval to 46 percent); China (from 58 percent to 38 percent), and Turkey (from 44 percent to 34 percent) despite the deterioration in Ankara's relations with Tehran over the past year.

As might be expected, Pew found less support among those respondents opposed to a nuclear-armed Iran about using military force to prevent it from acquiring a weapon.

Asked which was more important: "preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons, even if it means taking military action or avoiding a military conflict with Iran, even if it means they may develop nuclear weapons," pluralities or majorities ranging from 46 percent (Lebanon) to 55 percent (Brazil) in 14 countries, including Mexico, Egypt, Jordan, and all but Russia in Europe chose the military option. In addition, the U.S. was the most hawkish by far at 63 percent.

On the other hand, a 69 percent majority in Tunisia gave greater importance to avoiding military conflict, as did pluralities in Pakistan (29 percent), China (39 percent), Turkey (42 percent), Russia (41 percent), and Japan (49 percent).

Remarkably, support for military action fell in most of the countries that were polled on the same question in 2010; most notably in four of the six P5+1 countries, including Russia (from 32 percent to 24 percent), China (from 35 percent to 30 percent), France (from 59 percent to 51 percent), and the U.S. (from 66 to 63 percent). The question itself, however, came under fire from a number of critics here who

said that its "either/or" phrasing presents a false choice: military action that would prevent a nuclear-armed Iran or living with a nuclear-armed Iran.

"There are non-military options for preventing a nuclear-Iran," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association (ACA) here.

He also noted that the question assumed that the use of force "would be successful in preventing a nuclear-armed Iran, while the consensus among U.S. European, and Israeli military experts is that a military attack on Iran's nuclear facilities would at best delay Iran's programme by a couple of years or so, but would not 'prevent a nuclear-armed Iran'."

Similarly, Steven Kull, the director of the University of Maryland's Program on International Polling Attitudes (PIPA), criticised the questions, noting that "other polls (including some that PIPA has conducted) that offer a menu of options (for dealing with Iran's nuclear programme), including diplomacy and sanctions, have found that only small minorities elect to take military action."

Moreover, he said, the question about economic sanctions - do you approve or disapprove of tougher international economic sanctions on Iran to try to stop it from developing nuclear weapons - "implies that Iran is in the process of developing nuclear weapons. This is actually contrary to the conclusions of the U.S. intelligence community. It is implicitly making a statement about Iran's intentions."

Richard Wike, the Pew Project's associate director, told IPS: "As with all of our polls, the questions in this study are worded to explore people's opinions about issues being debated; their formulation is similar to questions used in past polls in order to examine and maintain trends." [IPS - May 18, 2012] ◆

## SCIENTISTS SPOTLIGHT NUCLEAR FAMINE PERILS

BY ERNEST COREA\* IN WASHINGTON

Support for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation suffered a setback when Republican Senator Richard Lugar was defeated at a pre-election primary (May 8) in the state of Indiana. He was eliminated by a tea party supported contender, and will not be the Republican Party candidate for the Senate in November. Lugar has announced, as well, that he will not run as an Independent.

This removes from the federal legislature a widely recognized and respected legislative activist on nuclear disarmament related issues that most of his colleagues would prefer to tuck under their mattresses and forget. Among them: a timely caution on the serious risk of nuclear famine.

Lesser beings are now left to focus on and bring good sense into decisions that impinge on security, stability, and survival.

Issues high on the international agenda include consideration of NATO's Deterrence and Defence Posture Review, and the attempt in the US House of Representatives to adopt legislation that would restrict implementation of the new START agreement.

On top of all that, comes a new report which presents and analyses scientific evidence, to show that even a regional nuclear war - conflict between India and Pakistan is the example cited - could cause massive disruption of agriculture producing countries far removed from the theatre of war. As always in such circumstances, the poor would be the most harmed.

The countries directly involved would obviously suffer directly and widely, and their painstakingly nurtured agricultural productivity would be lost, their crops and crop lands turned into radioactive dust. The warning now is that, in addition to direct results felt by nuclear combatants, repercussions would be felt elsewhere, too, with some major food producers hit hard.

The report, Nuclear Famine: A Billion People at Risk - Global Impact of Limited Nuclear War on Agriculture, Food Supplies, and Human Nutrition - was published by International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and its US affiliate, Physicians for Social Responsibility.

(International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War is a non-partisan federation of national medical organisations in 63 countries who share the common goal of creating a more peaceful and secure world freed from the threat of nuclear annihilation. Physicians for Social Responsibility is the largest physician-led organization in the U.S. working to prevent nuclear war and proliferation and to slow, stop and reverse global warming. Dr. Ira Helfand, author of the report, is the North American vice president of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War and a past president of Physicians for Social Responsibility.)

Says Helfand: "The grim prospect of nuclear famine requires a fundamental change in our thinking about nuclear weapons. The new evidence that even relatively small nuclear arsenals of countries such as India and Pakistan could cause long lasting, global damage to the Earth's ecosystems and threaten hundreds of millions of malnourished people over a decade would be a disaster unprecedented in human history." ➡

*\*The writer has served as Sri Lanka's ambassador to Canada, Cuba, Mexico, and the USA. He was Chairman of the Commonwealth Select Committee on the media and development, Editor of the Ceylon 'Daily News' and the Ceylon 'Observer', and was for a time Features Editor and Foreign Affairs columnist of the Singapore 'Straits Times'. He is Global Editor of IDN-InDepthNews and a member of its editorial board as well as President of the Media Task Force of Global Cooperation Council.*



## Food insecurity

The credentials of the author and of the institutions associated with the report, as well as its substance, make the report compelling. So, consider then, the world's current state of food security or, as the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) likes to put it, insecurity.

Food insecurity is generally beset by unpredictable conditions, more so in some years than in others, with the threats to human health and lives unevenly spread across the rich and poor countries of the world. Thus, approaches to issues that affect or are affected by food security and insecurity vary greatly. Where the wealthier nations grapple with the health risks of obesity, people in poor countries confront the challenges of hunger, and hidden hunger - malnutrition.

In addition, weather patterns including early signs of climate change, productivity, production, infrastructure, skewed trade practices, and investment all have a direct or indirect impact on food insecurity.

In 2011, the last year for which complete statistics are available, the world was not affected by the kind of crisis it experienced in 2006-2008. The aftermath of what was experienced at that time are, however, "challenging our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by half in 2015" say the heads of the three food-related agencies headquartered in Rome. FAO, IFAD (International Fund for Agricultural Development) and WFP, (the World Food Program).

They added the caution that "even if the MDG were achieved by 2015 some 600 million people in developing countries suffering from hunger on a daily basis is never acceptable."

If extended food insecurity is already considered unacceptable, how should the international community respond to the greater danger of nuclear war-induced famine?

Helfand and a team of experts in agriculture and nutrition worked with data produced by scientists who have studied the effects on cli-

mate of a hypothetical nuclear war between India and Pakistan. They determined, says Physicians for Social Responsibility, that "plunging temperatures and reduced precipitation in critical farming regions, caused by soot and smoke lofted into the atmosphere by multiple nuclear explosions, would interfere with crop production and affect food availability and prices worldwide."

In specific terms, a PSR statement points out, Helmland and his associates found that:

--In the US, corn (maize) production would decline by an average of 10 percent for an entire decade, with the most severe decline (20 percent) in fifth year. Soybean production would decline by about 7 percent, with the most severe loss, more than 20 percent, in the fifth year.

--China would experience a significant decline in middle-season rice production. During the first four years, rice production would decline by an average of 21 percent; over the next six years the decline would average 10 percent.

--Resulting increases in food prices would make food inaccessible to hundreds of millions of the world's poorest.

There is little left for the imagination, in this stark assessment, considering the fact that China and the US are the leading producers of those commodities.

The report itself states:

"The 925 million people in the world who are chronically malnourished have a baseline consumption of 1750 calories or less per day. Even a 10 percent decline in their food consumption would put this entire group at risk.

"In addition the anticipated suspension of exports from grain growing countries would threaten the food supplies of several hundred million additional people who have adequate nutrition today, but who live in

countries that are highly dependent on food imports. The number of people threatened by nuclear war-induced famine would be well over one billion."

The late S. Rajaratnam, Singapore's eloquent foreign minister and prescient political strategist, would say that "man does not live by bread alone but without bread he does not live at all." This is lightly stated but heavy in significance.

Agriculture lies at the core of development and of continued progress even in industrialised countries. That's why it is fair to say that a breakdown of food production and distribution in the dimensions spelled out by Helfland and his colleagues would result in unimaginable human suffering - over time, deaths - and eventually, in societal collapse across many countries that were not involved in the hypothetical regional conflict.

The quick and easy response to the alert that has been sounded would go something like this:

"Yes, the danger exists, but only if India and Pakistan actually engage in a nuclear war. They have unfortunately turned the sub-continent into a nuclear neighborhood but have exercised restraint and responsibility in not plunging the region into nuclear destruction. What is needed is for the international community to use all the leverage it can muster, to help both countries remain at peace."

Sure, but what is to prevent a militarized regime some day in the future from discarding the bonds of restraint? Besides, India and Pakistan are not the world's only regional powers with nuclear capacity. Israel, for instance, is widely believed to be a nuclear state. Others aspire to the same status in a volatile part of the world.

Efforts to persuade Middle East nations to talk to each other about keeping their region free of nuclear danger have fallen on politically deaf ears that have not been supplied with hearing aids. A preliminary regional conference scheduled for December 2012 is likely to be postponed.

The real safeguard against nuclear famine has to come not from some hit-or-miss "let's all keep the peace" process, with soothing songs warbled around a campfire, but with renewed international commitment to nuclear disarmament.

Jayantha Dhanapala, a Sri Lankan diplomat who was the UN Under Secretary General for Disarmament and is currently president of the Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs, has spent much of his professional life beating out the message of nuclear disarmament. He sums up the situation succinctly:

"Scientific evidence continues to confirm empirically what we already know - that nuclear weapons are the most destructive weapon of mass destruction ever invented with unrivaled genetic and ecological effects. And yet, unlike biological and chemical weapons they have not been outlawed because of vested interests.

"Nine countries have 20,530 nuclear warheads among them, 95 percent with the US and Russia. As long as these weapons exist others, including terrorists, will want them. As long as we have nuclear weapons their use by intention or accident; by states or by non-state actors is inevitable. Their total elimination through a Nuclear Weapons Convention is therefore the only solution."

A tough sell? Indeed. But consider this: what an outstanding outcome awaits the sale. [IDN-InDepthNews - May 19, 2012] ♦

## ASIA: DANGERS OF EXTENDED NUCLEAR DETERRENCE

BY NEENA BHANDARI IN SYDNEY

With India and Pakistan testing nuclear-capable ballistic missiles this April, close on the heels of North Korea's unsuccessful test launch of a long-range rocket, a new report by the Sydney-based Lowy Institute for International Policy says it is Asian strategic mistrust that is holding back nuclear disarmament.

According to Lowy's international security programme director Rory Medcalf, who is also principal editor of the report titled *Disarming Doubt: The Future of Extended Nuclear Deterrence in East Asia*, the nuclear disarmament push in Asia had stalled, owing to the region's tangle of strategic mistrust.

In particular, North Korea's continuing provocative nuclear and missile programmes, leaving Japan and South Korea looking to their defences; US allies unwilling to weaken the 'extended deterrence' umbrella under which they are defended by American nuclear weapons; China unwilling to cap the growth or modernisation of its nuclear arsenal; and the China-India-Pakistan triangle of mistrust and arms competition adding another major obstacle to nuclear arms control and disarmament in Asia.

Medcalf said this situation could be worsened if the high cost of conventional weapons ever drove a future US Administration to expand the role of nuclear armaments in America's strategic 'pivot' back to Asia.

Asia is steadily becoming increasingly militarised, as a result of rapid economic growth and strategic uncertainty. The International Institute for Strategic Studies in London said in March 2012 that arms spending by Asian nations will this year for the first time overtake that of European countries. China, Japan, India, South Korea and Australia accounted for more than 80 per cent of total Asian defence spending and Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam were all investing in improving air and naval capacities.

The Lowy report makes policy recommendations for governments to untangle Asia's nuclear dangers. Dr Sue Wareham, Member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons' (ICAN) Management Committee in Australia, says: "The recommendations are a mixed bag. While there is recognition of the devastating consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, there does not appear to be enunciation of the logical goal of getting rid of the weapons."

"The recommendation that extended deterrence should be used only to counter existential threats perpetuates the myth that deterrence is a legitimate and effective way to prevent acts of aggression. If indeed it is legitimate to use weapons of mass destruction as a deterrent, then one needs to explain why deterrence is legitimate for the US and those under its umbrella to use, and for China, but not for North Korea. The unstated and unsustainable rule that some nations may have nuclear weapons but some must not have them appears to go unchallenged," Dr Wareham told IDN.

"The recommendations also appear to paint a US role in Asia as a necessary and stabilising factor that China must accept. From an Australian perspective however, one must recognise the growing concern even in our own country at the negative signals being sent to Asia by our strong support for US military policy," she added.

The US President Barack Obama has called for further bilateral cuts to the US and Russian arsenals, including tactical weapons and warhead stockpiles, as well as issued a renewed invitation for China to commence a nuclear dialogue with the US.

Professor Andrew O'Neil, Director of the Griffith Asia Institute at Griffith University points out that the challenge in Asia with respect to progressing disarmament is two-fold. First, in stark contrast to Europe, "the region has no formal arms control arrangements and no

history of any serious negotiation on reducing military forces generally, let alone reducing nuclear warhead and missile stockpiles."

"Second, the region now has five nuclear weapons states (US, China, India, Pakistan and DPRK), an increase of three since the end of the Cold War. All of Asia's nuclear weapons states have indicated that outstanding political issues/conflicts need to be resolved before they will embark on military/nuclear reductions, and China has made it very clear that it will not reduce its arsenal until the US and Russia reduce their respective warhead stockpiles to the level that China has (i.e. around 150-200 warheads)," Professor O'Neil said.

It is the fundamental security dilemma among regional states that is making real progress towards disarmament difficult. As Professor O'Neil, who is also Editor-in-chief of the Australian Journal of International Affairs says, "Extended deterrence will probably increase in importance as the US seeks to leverage its nuclear superiority in order to compensate for its creeping conventional vulnerabilities in relation to China and the increasing anxiety in Japan and South Korea about North Korea's growing arsenal".

The Lowy report acknowledges that the process of building trust, confidence and institutions to support regional stability will be difficult for many reasons, including history, territorial differences, nationalism, resource pressures and the changing strategic balance.

Dr Leonid A. Petrov, Lecturer in Korean Studies at the University of Sydney says: "To deal with Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) successfully we must remember and understand Cold War history and its consequences for the region.

The reality of the inter-Korean conflict must be taken into account while engaging in dialogue or cooperation. The Korean War has never ended, and as long as regional powers help one side of the divided Korea and bully the other, the division of Korea will continue". As the first step towards ending the conflict in north-east Asia, Dr Petrov told IDN, "Mutual recognition of both the Republic of Korea (ROK) and

DPRK is necessary. A special status (neutral and non-nuclear) should be given to the Korean peninsula with no place for foreign troops or conflicting alliances. Only this would stop the century-long foreign rivalry for domination in Korea, and help the Koreans reconcile. Otherwise, China, Russia, the US and Japan will continue to be suspicious about each other's intentions in the region and would fear that a unified Korea would pose plausible threat to their respective national securities."

He suggests that by intensifying diplomatic ties and expanding economic cooperation with both halves of divided Korea, the US and its allies like Australia can make a significant contribution to the peaceful resolution of the nuclear problem and prepare the basis for durable peace and prosperity in the region.

Meanwhile, a study in the United States has warned that a billion people around the world could starve to death if India and Pakistan were involved in a nuclear exchange, and that even a "limited" war would cause significant climate disruptions. Corn production in the US would decline by 10 per cent for a decade and soybean production would drop by about 7 per cent. Rice production in China would fall by 21 per cent in the first four years.

Nine countries have 20,530 nuclear warheads among them 95 per cent with the US and Russia. "It is not just the arsenals of the US and Russia that pose a threat to the whole world. Even these smaller arsenals pose an existential threat to our civilisation, if not to our species," says Dr Ira Helfand, the author of *Nuclear Famine: A Billion People at Risk - Global Impacts of Limited Nuclear War on Agriculture, Food Supplies, and Human Nutrition* report produced by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and its US affiliate, Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) said.

The study calls for an urgent need to reduce the reliance on nuclear weapons by all nuclear weapons states and to move with all possible speed to the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention that will ban these weapons completely. [IDN-InDepthNews - April 28, 2012] ♦

## IMPASSIONED PLEA FOR AVERTING WAR WITH IRAN

BY RICHARD JOHNSON FROM LONDON

Pax Christi, the International Catholic Movement for Peace, has made an impassioned plea for averting war with Iran. "Surely such a war would spell worldwide disaster, and it's up to movements like us to send a strong message against military aggression," Pax Christi said in an important document.

"A war with Iran, to which a military attack would inevitably lead, would be a disaster for the whole world and any talk of a pre-emptive attack must be challenged as illegal and immoral," it said indirectly referring to Israeli threats of an assault on Iran.

Pax Christi calls for facing "the unresolved issue of Iran's civilian nuclear programme, to which it is entitled, and the fears that this will develop into a nuclear weapons programme, which would violate the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty" (NPT).

Significantly, the Catholic Peace Movement emphasizes that Iran is entitled to develop its civilian nuclear programme and takes into account fears that the civilian might turn into military with untoward implications.

However, Pax Christi points out that unlike North Korea, Iran has not withdrawn from the NPT. "But this is not an issue to be judged on its own," says the document released on March 13, 2012. "Signatories to that Treaty, which include Britain, promised to eliminate their own nuclear weapons" - a pledge that remains unfulfilled.

This applies to other nuclear weapons states as well, be these signatories or non-signatories to the NPT: the United States, France, India, Russia, China, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea.

Pax Christi recalls that in 1996 the International Court of Justice had ruled that there is an obligation on nuclear weapon states to negoti-

ate the abolition of nuclear weapons and to bring such negotiations to a successful conclusion.

The ruling has in practice gone unnoticed. Pax Christi suggests the following as a way forward "in solidarity with the people of Iran and all peoples potentially threatened by nuclear weapons through accident, misunderstandings or deliberate use".

It calls upon the British government to lead by the best example by:

- Ceasing its preparation of a new generation of nuclear weapons. "Far from negotiating elimination of these weapons Britain is planning to build yet another generation of nuclear weapons to follow Trident, at a cost of billions of pounds which would be far better spent on the real needs of our people," notes Pax Christi.
- Showing the transparency it seeks in Iran with regard to allowing international inspections of our own nuclear plants and facilities.
- Lifting sanctions on Iran when there are signs of progress.
- Employing every diplomatic means both nationally and through the European Union and the United Nations to make the possession of nuclear weapons by any state illegal.
- Calling on Israel to officially admit to having a nuclear arsenal, the existence of which is beyond any doubt.

Pax Christi also wants Britain to work to demilitarise the region through a sustained programme of conventional and nuclear disarmament and in particular to create a Nuclear Weapons Free Middle East. This is to be discussed at the forthcoming UN Middle East Nuclear Free Zone conference this year in Helsinki, which it urges all countries to

support. Such a Zone will mean that nuclear-armed ships from other states do not patrol in the Middle East area.

- Supporting efforts to establish common regional structures that ensure the security needs of all states to build a common, sustainable security.

"The peace we seek cannot come from weaponry, but from a commitment to justice and nonviolent actions which recognise the dignity of every human person and all creation. We reject models of security that rely on fear, the demonisation of others or on the strength of arms - conventional and nuclear," Pax Christi said.

It affirmed the words of Archbishop Francis Chullikatt, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations speaking in 2011. "Proliferation is a real and serious challenge. However, non-proliferation efforts will only be effective if they are universal. The nuclear-weapon states must abide by their obligations to negotiate the total elimination of their own arsenals if they are to have any authenticity in holding the non-nuclear states to their commitments not to pursue nuclear weapons...."

### **Disarmament Commission**

The need for universal elimination of nuclear weapons was also stressed at the UN Disarmament Commission early April 2012. Wrapping up the Commission's general debate on April 5, Iran's Eshagh Al Habib urged this UN body to accord priority to the agenda item on nuclear disarmament as a "long-delayed part of its mandate".

"While there was no pretext to justify the position of nuclear weapons in the hands of any country, it was a source of grave concern that certain nuclear-weapon States still continued to allocate billions of dollars to develop new types of nuclear weapons, build nuclear weapons production facilities and replace such weapons," a summary of the debate says.

In that vein, Iran supported the proposal of the Non-Aligned Movement on the adoption of a legal framework for the total elimination of nuclear weapons by 2025, Al Habib said. It was important to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention and a universal and unconditionally binding instrument on negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapons States.

Meanwhile, noted the summary, despite the stated intentions by some nuclear-weapons States to reduce part of their nuclear-weapon stocks, limited bilateral and unilateral arms reductions were far below the expectations of the international community, and could never be a substitute for the obligations of those States to completely eliminate their nuclear weapons.

Turning to the horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, which constituted another serious challenge, he said the best way to guarantee the non-proliferation of weapons was the "full and non-selective" implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. Its universality must be assured, in particular in the Middle East, where the nuclear-weapon programme of the only non-party to the treaty - which had also been assisted by France - seriously threatened regional and international peace and security.

China's Zhang Juan'An said that the international community should foster a peaceful, cooperative and stable security environment, so as to remove the root cause of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

All parties, Juan'An said, should work together to consolidate the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and ensure the impartiality and non-discrimination of international efforts, adhering to resolving "non-proliferation hotspot issues" through political and diplomatic means. China continued to call for the peaceful resolution of the Korean peninsula and Iranian nuclear issues; indeed, he said, the relevant diplomatic processes were "facing good opportunities nowadays," he added. [IDN-InDepthNews - April 17, 2012] ◆

## 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 partners between April 2012 and March 2013 as part of the SGI-IPS project.

We trust this compilation will enable interested readers -- and perhaps researchers too - to inform themselves of some important developments leading up to the landmark 2015 NPT Review Conference.

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 - the latest first - as these are freely available online at [www.ipsnews.net/news/projects/nuclear-weapons/](http://www.ipsnews.net/news/projects/nuclear-weapons/) and [www.nuclearabolition.net](http://www.nuclearabolition.net).

While all articles continue to be obtainable on the Internet, this compilation in print or as .pdf offers a short cut sans World Wide Web, handy anywhere and any time that suits the reader's convenience.

We trust you will enjoy reading these articles - and we very much welcome your feedback.

Thanks due to the support of project director, Mr. Katsuhiro Asagiri, president of IPS Japan, 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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## Nuclear Abolition News and Analysis

### India Can Be Nuclear Suppliers' Credible Partner



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By RAJIV NARANI

NEW DELHI - Some of the [Nuclear Suppliers Group](#) members are expressing unnecessary apprehensions regarding India's membership. Unlike China, India has a track record of complying with obligations of any treaty or agreement it signs.

The 2013 Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) plenary meeting in Prague, from June 13 to 14, assumed significance in the context of the on-going crises relating to Iran and North Korea as well as the legitimacy crisis faced by the group because of the Chinese proliferation behaviour. Equally important challenges before the NSG have been the advancement in global nuclear technology as well as the expansion of its membership whereas its goals and objectives are promoted not compromised.

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Nuclear Abolition News | [IPS](#)

By THALIF DEEN

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Nuclear Abolition News | [IPS](#)

By GARETH PORTER

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