

# Toward A World Without Nuclear Weapons



2020 Joint Media Project Report



Soka Gakkai  
International



## CREDITS

The news articles, analyses and opinions in this report were published between April 2019 and March 2020 in IDN-InDepthNews ([www.indepthnews.net](http://www.indepthnews.net)). These were posted on the project website 'Toward A Nuclear Free World', a Joint Media Project of the Non-profit International Press Syndicate Group with IDN as the Flagship Agency in partnership with Soka Gakkai International in consultative status with ECOSOC.

Publishers: The International Press Syndicate Group  
Europaplatz 2, D -10557 Berlin

Cover: UNITAR Office in Hiroshima Feb 2015  
Credit: United Nations Institute for Training and Research

Global Coordinator | Editor-in-Charge: Ramesh Jaura

Project Director: Katsuhiko Asagiri, President International Press Syndicate (INPS) Japan,  
Ichimura bldg. 4F, 3-2 Kanda Ogawa-cho, Chiyoda-ku,  
Tokyo, Japan 101-0052

Layout: Radwan Jakeem

*All material in this compilation is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International. Readers are welcome to share, remix, tweak, and build upon it non-commercially, as long as they credit it to the author and IDN-InDepthNews and licence their new creations under the identical terms.*



## PREFACE

*By Ramesh Jaura*

*Director-General of the Non-profit International Press Syndicate Group  
and Editor-in-Chief of its Flagship Agency IDN-InDepthNews*

This Report of the Joint Media Project of the Non-profit International Press Syndicate Group with IDN as the Flagship Agency in partnership with Soka Gakkai International in consultative status with ECOSOC, is a compilation of independent and in-depth news and analyses by IDN from April 2019 to March 2020.

The articles in this compilation appeared on [www.indepthnews.net](http://www.indepthnews.net) in the main category nuclear weapons and disarmament on the INPS Group's thematic web-site "Toward A Nuclear Free World"—[www.nuclearabolition.info](http://www.nuclearabolition.info). These can be accessed free of charge 365 days a year.

2019-2020 was the fourth year of the INPS Group's media project with the SGI, a lay Buddhist organization with headquarters in Tokyo. But IDN has been a party to the joint project, first launched in 2009 in the wake of an agreement between the precursor of the International Press Syndicate (INPS) Japan and the SGI. We are pleased that meanwhile we are in the fifth year of the INPS Group's joint media project with the SGI.

We are pleased that at the time of writing these lines, we are already in the fifth year of the INPS Group's 'SDGs for All' joint media project with the SGI.

This compilation comprises 33 articles analysing the developments related to proliferation and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons at multiple levels – governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental. All articles have been translated into Japanese. Some have been translated into different languages, including Arabic, Bahasa, Chinese, German, Italian, Hindi, Korean, Malay, Norwegian, Swedish and Thai.

The backdrop to these articles is that nuclear weapon states have been fiercely opposing the Nuclear Ban Treaty arguing that it ignores the reality of vital security considerations, indicating that they would not engage with it. At the same time, a complete elimination of nuclear weapons is increasingly becoming a global collaborative effort calling for relentless commitment and robust solidarity between States, international organisations and the civil society.

However, as this compilation underlines in more than one analysis and opinion piece, in order to secure a foothold for a world free from nuclear weapons, it is necessary to expand the involvement of people worldwide. All the more so because one after the other arms control agreement between the US and Russia is being smashed to pieces, not the least at the behest of President Donald Trump.

Eminent Buddhist philosopher, educator, author, and nuclear disarmament advocate Dr. Daisaku Ikeda released his latest Peace Proposal in January 2020 calling for Multilateral negotiations for nuclear disarmament. He proposed two agreements—one regarding the start of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations and the other for deliberations on artificial intelligence (AI), other new technologies and nuclear weapons—to be included in the final outcome statement of the NPT Review Conference which has been postponed to 2021 because of Corona.

He believes that it is crucial to first achieve the extension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the United States and Russia, and then to begin multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. He proposed that, on the basis of a five-year extension of New START, the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France and China begin negotiations on a new nuclear disarmament treaty beginning with dialogues on verification regimes.

I would like to avail of this opportunity to express my gratitude to the network of our correspondents around the world for their insightful contributions, the Project Director, INPS Japan President Katsuhiko Asagiri for his valuable support in implementing the project, and the SGI for the trusted and professional partnership.

Sincere thanks also to Dr. J. Enkhsaikhan, Former Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations, Chairman of Blue Banner NGO, for taking time for a Foreword. We also appreciate the Message very much by Mr Kazuo Ishiwatari, SGI's Executive Director, Peace and Global Issues. < >

## FOREWORD

By Dr. J. Enkhsaikhan

Former Permanent Representative of Mongolia to the United Nations, Chairman of Blue Banner NGO



Collage of the photos of Dr J. Enkhsaikhan on the left, Blue Banner and Chinggis Khaan (Sükhbaatar) Square in Mongolia's capital city Ulaanbaatar on the right (CC BY-SA 4.0).

The first half of 2020 has demonstrated once again that the world has indeed become closely interconnected and that cooperation of states and other stakeholders is imperative to deal with the current three existential threats that know no borders: the existence of weapons of mass destruction, the climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Inaction or indifference to such threats is in itself developing into a fourth such threat. It is also witnessing increased great power political and economic rivalry that can adversely affect the international environment.

*The pandemic.* The above threats, especially the current pandemic, demonstrate that not unilateralism, protectionism or rivalry but rather multilateralism, mutual understanding and cooperation are needed to address the common threats and challenges meaningfully. Today the maxim that it is better to hang together rather than hang separately underlines the importance of broad cooperation rather than narrow nationalism or rivalry.

The pandemic has demonstrated that national health systems in many countries and international cooperation in promoting public health are still weak in facing the pandemic and that even the developed world was incapable of effectively countering. Time was lost to take the necessary measures, to exchange vital information and experience on how best to address it. Developing an effective vaccine should bring together not only scientists and doctors, but the entire world. Hopefully, the world will also work closely together in addressing the other existential threats.

*Weapons of mass destruction,* including nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, pose another clear existential threat to humankind. Mindful of the COVID-19 pandemic the 1972 Bacteriological (Biological) weapons convention needs to be looked again to preclude weaponizing pandemics.

As to nuclear weapons, its threat has not been eliminated with the end of the cold war. On the contrary, the number of nuclear-weapon states has increased. Though in the post-cold war three decades the number of nuclear weapons possessed by the U.S. and Russia has quantitatively been reduced, the threat of atomic weapons has not decreased but in fact, is increasing.

The essential U.S.-Russian bilateral nuclear arms elimination or reduction agreements have been revoked, while some others are being torpedoed. Hypersonic, space and some other advanced weapons and weapons systems are being developed, while the threshold of the use of nuclear weapons is being lowered by reducing their yield.

There are talks of even resuming nuclear weapons testing which can have a far-reaching domino effect. The non-proliferation regime is being weakened due to refusal of the nuclear-weapon states, parties to the NPT, to implement their commitment 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".

Unilateral withdrawal from a multilateral agreement on Iran's nuclear program risks to unravel the deal. Talks on denuclearizing the Korean peninsula are stalled due to unwillingness of the sides to make serious commitments.

These troubling events are underway while it has been demonstrated that in case nuclear weapons were to be used either by design, due to human or systemic error or even accidentally, the threat will be, unlike the current pandemic, instantaneous with much larger casualties in which case also well-trained and dedicated physicians would practically be helpless.

Knowing well the devastating humanitarian consequence of the use of nuclear weapons as witnessed in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 and the testimonies of the Hibakushas, in 1980 physicians of various countries have established a non-partisan professional organization known as the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) that had declared that physicians would be helpless in providing adequate medical assistance to the victims and that the best remedy available is the prevention of such a catastrophe in the first place.

The recent studies on humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons have convincingly demonstrated that the use of even a few of such weapons would result in hundreds of thousands of instantaneous deaths followed by much more agonizing deaths and sufferings of peoples and that it would also cause catastrophic disruptions in the global climate leading to the so-called nuclear famine.

Role of the mass media. The revolution underway in the means of mass communication is making the media the most direct source of information for the general public. Today it is expected to play an important role in raising public awareness, shaping public attitudes and opinions, and through the activities of peoples affect the ultimate decision-makers – the governments.

However, the media should not be a mere transmitter of widely available information since the latter includes both objectives, fact-based information as well as biased ones or the so-called fake news that can affect the users. The media should not follow the logic that "good news is bad news" or "bad news is good news" but should promote the strengthening of peace, security and mutual understanding of peoples by serving as a responsible and effective means of providing objective information, showing the larger picture and the effects and by contextualizing the issues involved making sure that people understand well the issues involved, the challenges and opportunities and become actively involved in promoting the issues directly or through groups that share the same or identical views. < >

## MESSAGE

*By Kazuo Ishiwatari*

*Executive Director, Peace and Global Issues, Soka Gakkai International (SGI)*



It has been three years since the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was adopted in July 2017 at the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons. Currently, there are 38 states which have ratified the treaty, and it is close to reaching 50 ratifications for the treaty to enter into force.

It was considered that the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) lacked consensus as a result of the failure to hold a conference on the establishment of a weapons of mass destruction free zone (WMDFFZ) in the Middle East; however, the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction finally held its First Session at the United Nations Headquarters in New York last year. It is hoped that steady steps toward disarmament have been marked.

On the other hand, it is also true that bilateral and multilateral trust has been collapsing and the curbing of the nuclear arms race is at stake. There are no signs of extending the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty has now expired. Our security environment is being continually threatened—the total global military expenditure reached \$1917 billion in 2019 which includes an estimated \$73 billion spend on nuclear weapons by the nine nuclear-armed countries of the world.

In addition, there is the new emerging risk of new technologies on Artificial Intelligence (AI) which are being developed. In his 2020 Peace Proposal, SGI President Daisaku Ikeda highlighted the idea of “common security” in reference to the Joint Soviet-United States Statement in 1985 which stated: “A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.” And now is the time that that spirit of common security needs to be revived the most.

As part of civil society, SGI has supported and promoted activities toward the early entry into force of the TPNW. In June 2019, SGI contributed to a Caribbean Regional Forum on the TPNW which was convened in Guyana by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). In October last year, SGI also showcased the SGI/ICAN antinuclear exhibition Everything You Treasure in Kazakhstan for the first time in Central Asia.

In addition, at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly last year, SGI issued a statement that stressed the importance of disarmament education and the entry into force of the TPNW and its universalization. In May this year, SGI also participated in the Joint Statement from Civil Society to the State Parties of the NPT together with more than 80 organizations calling for progress toward the elimination of nuclear weapons. We continue to contribute to discussions on nuclear disarmament from a moral and ethical perspective and to amplify the calls for their elimination.

This year marks an important milestone in nuclear disarmament, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT. SGI President Ikeda stated in his annual peace proposal this year that “in order for the prohibition of nuclear weapons to take root as a global norm for humanity, the people themselves should instigate debate based on the shared recognition that the horrors of nuclear weapons must never be visited upon any country.”

The current coronavirus pandemic poses an important question regarding what truly guarantees security for a nation and humanity. Now is the time to reframe it.

Buddhism teaches the idea of “changing poison into medicine.” It is now when humanity is facing unprecedented threats posed by the issues of nuclear weapons, climate change, and the coronavirus, that we should seize such crises as an opportunity to establish the kind of true security that is for all humanity.

SGI is committed to promoting empowerment of, by and for the people in order to address the global challenges that we face and move toward a world free from nuclear weapons using the momentum of human solidarity that is expanding all around the world.

<>

## CONTENTS

Behind North Korea's New Missile Launches in the Midst of Coronavirus Pandemic <i>by Santo D. Banerjee</i>	09
Committee on Teaching About the UN Demands 'War No More' <i>by Narin B. Stassis</i>	11
Trump's Abandonment of Nuclear Deal with Iran Backfires <i>by Reinhard Jacobsen</i>	13
Uncertainty Haunts the Future of Non-Proliferation Treaty and Disarmament <i>Viewpoint by Tariq Rauf</i>	15
US Abrogation of Iran Deal Leaves a Puzzling Legacy <i>by Bernhard Schell</i>	18
Towards Nuclear Disarmament with Monitoring and Verification <i>by Radwan Jakeem</i>	20
Sri Lanka Committed to Non-Proliferation and Disarmament <i>by Jaya Ramachandran</i>	22
The G20 Should Have Nuclear Disarmament on Their Agenda <i>Viewpoint by Herbert Wulf</i>	24
Youth to The Front for Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons <i>by J Nastranis</i>	26
Rising Concern in Russia About Spiralling Arms Race <i>by Kester Kenn Klomegah</i>	28
Middle Eastern States Are Back on The Path to A WMD Free Zone <i>Viewpoint by Sergio Duarte</i>	31
Australia's 'Quit Nukes' Campaign Targets Superannuation Funds <i>by Neena Bhandari</i>	34
Anxiety Looms Over the 10th NPT Review Conference Next Year <i>Viewpoint by Sergio Duarte</i>	36
Growing Anxiety About the Crucial 2020 NPT Review Conference <i>by Santo D. Banerjee</i>	39
Nuclear Abolition Exhibition Boosts Japan-Kazakh Relations <i>by Katsuhiko Asagiri</i>	42
New Study Warns of Devastating Global Consequences of an India-Pak Nuclear War <i>by Daniel Strain</i>	45
UN Chief Warns of Nuclear Disarmament Going Reverse <i>by Shanta Roy</i>	47
Concerns About Military Build-up in Iceland <i>by Lowana Veal</i>	49
Special UN Meeting Calls for Entry into Force of Nuclear Test Ban Treaty <i>by J Nastranis</i>	51
UN Denies Endorsement of India in NSG-Nuclear Suppliers Group <i>by Shanta Roy</i>	53
UN Denies Endorsement of India in NSG-Nuclear Suppliers Group <i>by Shanta Roy</i>	54
Kazakhstan Honours Advocates of a Nuclear-Free World <i>by Ramesh Jaura</i>	56
Grave Concern About US-Russian Actions Evoking Cold War <i>by Santo D. Banerjee</i>	59
The Devastating Arms Race Rages Unabated <i>Viewpoint by Somar Wijayadasa</i>	62
Australia Urged to Sign and Ratify the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty <i>by Neena Bhandari</i>	65
Growing Concern about US-Russian Disarmament Treaties <i>by Jamshed Baruah</i>	68
Caribbean States Vow to Facilitate Swift Entry into Force of Nuclear Ban Treaty <i>by Jaya Ramachandran</i>	70
Resist Erosion of NPT to Rid the World of Atomic Bombs <i>Viewpoint by Sergio Duarte</i>	72
The Blame Game Obstructs the Path to NPT 50 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary <i>Viewpoint by Tariq Rauf</i>	75
Fiddling While the Nuclear Arms Control Architecture Collapses <i>Viewpoint by Tariq Rauf</i>	78
Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Conference Could Hits a U.S. Roadblock <i>by Shanta Roy</i>	80
UN Eager to Advance Commitment to Nuclear Non-Proliferation <i>by Jamshed Baruah</i>	83
New Attempt to Tackle Nuclear Proliferation Threat in the Middle East <i>by Santo D. Banerjee</i>	86
Eminent Buddhist Leader Urges Halt to Nuclear Weapons and Killer Robots <i>by Ramesh Jaura</i>	89
South Africa a Shining Example of Dismantling Nuclear Arsenal <i>by J Nastranis</i>	93

## Behind North Korea's New Missile Launches in the Midst of Coronavirus Pandemic

*By Santo D. Banerjee*



*Photo: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump at the Singapore Summit on June 12, 2018. Source: @Scavino45 of Dan Scavino Jr., the White House Director of Social Media and Assistant to the President.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – While the international community has been engrossed in combating the global COVID-19 pandemic, it has been constrained to respond to North Korea's first missile launches this year. The United Nations Security Council convened behind closed doors on March 5 but failed to agree on a resolution.

However, Britain, Germany, France, Estonia and Belgium said in a "joint statement" that they are "deeply concerned by the testing of ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea" (DPRK) on March 1. While Britain and France are two of the five permanent Security Council members, Germany, Estonia and Belgium are non-permanent.

The statement pointed out that the DPRK has conducted 14 sets of ballistic missile launches since May 2019. "It has continued to operate its nuclear and ballistic missile programs. The panel of experts working on the DPRK has continuously highlighted such efforts."

The two permanent and three non-permanent Security Council members condemned "such provocative actions" that "undermine regional security and stability, as well as international peace and security, and are in clear violation of unanimously adopted UN Security Council resolutions".

They affirmed that they "continue to urge the DPRK to engage in good faith in meaningful negotiations with the United States aimed at denuclearization, and to take concrete steps to abandoning all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to refrain from further provocations".

They added: "There is no other way to achieve security and stability on the Korean Peninsula. Continued provocations risk undermining the prospect for successful negotiations."

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

Against the backdrop of the Security Council's failure to agree on a resolution – reportedly because of the dissent between United States, Russia and China – the five said: "It is vital that the Security Council ensures full implementation of its resolutions and that sanctions remain in place."

Russia and China are concerned that sanctions are harming North Korean civilians, and have expressed hope that easing some restrictions could help break a deadlock in nuclear talks between Washington and Pyongyang. The two submitted a draft resolution in December 2019 that would lift sanctions on industries that earned North Korea hundreds of millions of dollars.

Those sanctions were imposed in 2016 and 2017 to cut off funding for Pyongyang's nuclear and missile programs. The DPRK has been under UN sanctions since 2006 over its missile and nuclear programs, which the Security Council has unanimously strengthened over the years.

China's UN Ambassador Zhang Jun told reporters on March 2: "That text of the draft resolution remains on the table and we are open for views on that. We believe that it's a very important step in creating a more favorable environment for the further improvement of the situation in the Korean Peninsula."

The joint statement by Britain, Germany, France, Estonia and Belgium called on the international community "to comply with the obligation to strictly enforce these sanctions, including by reporting on their implementation in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the Council".

Commenting reports of the testing of two more ballistic missiles by North Korea on March 21, a spokesperson of the German Foreign Office "vehemently" condemned the tests of the two short-range ballistic missiles. "With two tests of several missiles this month..., North Korea has once again violated its obligations under relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council. By conducting these tests, North Korea is irresponsibly jeopardising international security," the Foreign Office spokesperson said.

The German Government called on North Korea to abide by its obligations under international law and, in particular, to refrain from testing further ballistic missiles, as well as to accept the United States' offer to resume the negotiations that were broken off by North Korea. Observers say that since the collapse of the second Kim-Trump summit on February 27–28 in 2019 in Vietnam, the DPRK has resumed ballistic activity and weapons launches to expand its military capabilities. They recall that Kim started the new year vowing to bolster his nuclear deterrent in the face of "gangster-like" U.S. sanctions and pressure.

Christopher Ford, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for international security and nonproliferation, reiterated at a briefing on March 19 that the Trump administration is "ready and willing and prepared" to start working-level discussions with North Korea aimed at implementing the commitments made at the first summit in Singapore "as soon as possible".

Kim made a vague pledge in 2018 talks in Singapore to work toward complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the two leaders agreed to improve relations to build lasting peace. But their two subsequent summits and other lower-level meetings have not achieved much progress in expatiating those agreements.

According to Stephen Nagy, a senior associate professor at International Christian University, the March launches were intended to refocus the Trump administration's focus on North Korea in an effort to get some sanctions relief and possible aid as the COVID-19 epidemic spreads. "With the failure of Kim's diplomacy in mind, the world distracted with the COVID-19 epidemic and the Trump administration not even discussing North Korea, Pyongyang's missile test is signaling to the United States that North Korea is still a disruptive force that needs to be dealt with," Kyodo News quoted Nagy.

In fact, other foreign affairs experts also expect the DPRK to continue test-firing missiles as Kim may think Trump, who is seeking a second term in office, does not want to be humiliated by Pyongyang in the run-up to the U.S. presidential election in November. A diplomatic source, however, has expressed skepticism that Kim would escalate his provocations against the United States, since the new virus spread has apparently dealt a heavy blow to North Korea's economy. [IDN-InDepthNews – 25 March 2020]

## Committee on Teaching About the UN Demands 'War No More'

By Narin B. Stassis



Photo: Leymah Gbowee, Nobel Peace laureate, Gloria Steinem, author activist and Carol Jenkins, CEO of the ERA Coalition at the War No More conference Feb 28, 2020 UN and an overview of the conference. Credit: CTAUN/Don Carlson

*The author currently serves as the Vice Chair of the Committee on Teaching About the UN. She is a former Director of Curriculum and Instruction, a lifelong Educator, and holds a Master's degree in International Education from Lesley University.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The United Nations was created with a determination "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". As the world body celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, the Committee on Teaching About the United Nations (CTAUN), convened a conference, "War No More", co-sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Korea to the United Nations.

The UN Trusteeship Council Chamber, where the conference took place end of February, was filled to capacity with 673 people, mostly students from junior year of high school through graduate school, along with working and retired educators, and other interested individuals.

The program included Davos-style conversations, awards, short films, and topics all relating to the "War No More" theme.

Ambassador Cho, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea (RoK), pointed out some of the deeply resounding facts about the Korean Peninsula and its history entrenched in the horrors of war in the 1950's, where families were divided and remain divided until this day.

He explained how the very existence of the RoK is a living testament to "War No More", and that this sad history is one of the reasons the Republic of Korea stands as one of the strongest advocates for peace.

A powerful conversation between Gloria Steinem, and Nobel Peace Laureate Leymah Gbowee ensued, moderated by media personality Carol Jenkins who spoke about how "the addition of women in keeping peace, ending wars, and as women participating in every aspect of peace" propelled the conversation.

Steinem explained how for the first time in history there are fewer females, than males on "spaceship earth", which she attributed to societies that encourage male dominance and in some cases violence against females.

Her resounding comment referred to: "Listening as much as you talk, sitting in circles instead of hierarchies, and celebrating the fact we learn from our differences, not sameness." She said: "Peace is like a tree, it doesn't grow from the top down, but grows from the bottom up. So, honor, respect, and pressure the UN, but don't wait for the UN – Just do it."

Leymah Gbowee told the attendees that, "The essence of no more war is something that cannot be achieved in the corridors of the UN. We can only guide the next generation through our actions, through our policies, and the way we conduct ourselves."

The 2020 winner of the CTAUN Global Citizen Award, in memory of its founder Barbara Walker, was bestowed upon Cora Weiss, whose name came up in many a conversation throughout the day.

"She is our true born leader" said Jenkins, who with Gloria Steinem, spoke about her as a drafter of Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325. The highly respected, and adored Weiss, nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for the fifth time this year, was lauded as a true global citizen for her lifelong contributions to peace and education.

The Peace Education and Transformative Education conversation began with Eunhee Jung, Founder and President of IVECA, who spoke about Transformative Education which develops people's mindset to have an awareness of living in a global society with an understanding and sense of compassion, empathy, knowledge, and skills to solve issues.

Tony Jenkins, Coordinator, Global Campaign for Peace Education, expressed the need to transform all education to address the problem of the culture of violence that is prevailing.

Moderator, Ramu Damodaran, Chief of the United Nations Academic Impact Initiative, referred to the copy of the 1924 lithograph included in the registration packet by Käthe Kollwitz called Never Again War (Nie Wieder Krieg). He said: "Where do the 193 member-states of this organization find the courage to send their daughters and sons to war when they, as governments, and this the United Nations, have tried to hold them in trusteeship with such loving care?"

The New Technologies conversation, facilitated by Columbia University student Mark Wood, included Michael Klare, Senior Visiting Fellow, Arms Control Association, Eleanore Pauwels, Senior Fellow with the Global Center on Cooperative Security; and Adaora Udoji, award winning journalist, media innovator and expert in emerging technologies.

Their conversation emphasized the increased speed with which new technologies are being developed. The experts discussed how warfare is changing with hypersonic weapons, cyber warfare, space warfare, and artificial intelligence. Klare discussed the fear that "Generals and policy makers are rushing to weaponize new technologies and put them to the service of war, without giving consideration to the moral, ethical, and escalating implications of doing so".

These implications could permit new technologies to decide when battlefield conditions and select military responses will be made by machines themselves using built-in algorithms. This ethical dilemma would put into question whether machines, not humans, should make

decisions in warfare based on the bias of the programmers.

The Women Peace and Security conversation focused on topics that are exclusive to women and how they experience war and conflict differently than men. The fact that there are 10 resolutions on women, peace and security shows the shift in recognition. Dinah Lakehal, Mallika Iyer, Heela Yoon GNWP's Young Women for Peace and Leadership, illustrated the power of grass roots organizations and civil society who are breathing life into these resolutions.

The inextricable need and importance of peace education was affirmed by moderator George Lopez, Professor Emeritus of Peace Studies at the Notre Dame Kroc Institute. The discussion on disarmament began with Lopez talking about "A world awash in arms of both the conventional and nuclear nature".

Under Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu referred to the Secretary-General António Guterres' message for disarmament, pointing out that he is the first UN Secretary-General who compiled and released such a comprehensive agenda which brings together issues related to disarmament as well. She reinforced the need for partnerships to strengthen collaborations, corporations, and the importance of young people. She stated that the Secretary-General called young people the ultimate force of change.

Randy Rydell, Executive Advisor for Mayors for Peace, said the effects of nuclear weaponry were riveting, with 400 mph winds, temperatures as hot as the surface of the sun, the immediate after-effects of radiation, intergenerational and genetic changes and effecting climate with atmospheric possibilities like famine.

A rousing performance by Camryn Bruno, the New York City Youth Poet Laureate ended the conversation. A recorded poignant message from Ben Ferencz, who was the lead prosecutor for the Nuremberg War Trials was shown before the World Peace Through Law conversation. James T. Ranney, who served as the Counsel to International Trials of the former Yugoslavia, spoke about the need for compulsory international dispute resolution, and various enforcement mechanisms. The conference closing statement came from Ambassador Christian Wenaweser, Permanent Representative of Liechtenstein, who thanked the Mission of Korea for co-sponsoring the conference. [IDN-InDepthNews – 12 March 2020]

## Trump's Abandonment of Nuclear Deal with Iran Backfires

*By Reinhard Jacobsen*



*Photo: Protests after U.S. decision to withdraw from JCPOA, around former U.S. embassy, Tehran, on 8 May 2018. CC BY 4.0.*

VIENNA (IDN) — The quarterly report on Iran released by UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), on March 3 has revealed a significant increase in the country's stockpile of enriched uranium since its last report. The stockpile stood at 1,020.9 kg in February, up from 372.3 kg in November 2019, reports Jane's Defence Weekly.

This 648.6 kg increase is raising international concern as it marks a significant breach of the 300 kg stockpile limit imposed on Iran by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) signed between Iran and the P5+1— China France, Germany, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States — on July 14, 2015. The nuclear deal was endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231, adopted on July 20, 2015.

"There have been no major changes in other parameters of Iran's nuclear programme, with enrichment levels not exceeding 4.5%. The JCPOA limits Iran's enrichment to 3.67%," adds Jane's Defence Weekly.

The JCPOA includes Iran's own long-term plan with agreed limitations on Iran's nuclear program, and will produce the comprehensive lifting of all UN Security Council sanctions as well as multilateral and national sanctions related to Iran's nuclear programme, including steps on access in areas of trade, technology, finance, and energy. "Iran has sufficient fuel for a bomb," says New York Times. But adds: "So far, the evidence suggests that Iran's recent actions are calculated to pressure the Trump administration and Europe rather than rushing for a bomb."

The newspaper argues: While for the first time since U.S. President Donald Trump abandoned the 2015 nuclear deal, Tehran appears to have enough enriched uranium to produce a single nuclear weapon, "it would take months or years to manufacture a warhead and deliver it over long distances".

For sure not a supporter of the Iran regime, the global newspaper takes much of the wind out of the U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's sails.

In a press statement on March 5, 2020, Pompeo refers to newly appointed IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi's two new reports on March 3 "that heighten already serious concerns that the Islamic Republic of Iran is hiding its nuclear material and nuclear activities".

Iran, says Pompeo, is a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Iran's safeguards agreements, under that Treaty, require it to declare nuclear material to the IAEA and provide IAEA inspectors with access for verification, he adds. "Iran's intentional failure to declare such nuclear material would be a clear violation of its safeguards agreement required by the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

"Iran's intentional failure to declare such nuclear material would be a clear violation of its safeguards agreement required by the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The regime must immediately cooperate with the IAEA and fully comply with its IAEA safeguards obligations. Otherwise, the NPT isn't worth the paper it is written on."

According to Pompeo, IAEA's latest reports are all the more troubling "because we know that Iran continues to lie about its past nuclear weapons program and concealed a vast archive of records from those efforts when it concluded the nuclear deal – not to mention its lies about downing a civilian airliner, and its suppression of the extent of its coronavirus outbreak.

Given Iran's prior covert nuclear weapons program and ignominious record of duplicity, any undeclared nuclear material or activities in Iran today would be an extremely serious matter."

Grossi, an Argentine diplomat who has spent most of his life working on nuclear issues, said it was urgent for "Iran immediately to cooperate fully with the agency" by allowing it access to the sites, and to answer additional questions "related to possible undeclared nuclear material and nuclear-related activities".

In response, Iran said it rejected the agency's new rounds of questions because it had been cleared of responsibility to answer for its nuclear past. Iran, the report quoted Tehran as saying, "will not recognize any allegation on past activities and does not consider itself obliged to respond to such allegations".

One year ago, on March 4, Grossi's widely respected predecessor Yukiya Amano, a Japanese diplomat, remarked to IAEA's Board of Governors, "Iran is implementing its nuclear commitments". Amano, who died in July 2019, urged Tehran to continue adhering to the deal, known as JCPOA.

The IAEA's March 2019 quarterly report on Iran's nuclear program, released publicly just days after Amano's statement, contained additional details demonstrating that Iran is abiding by the deal's terms.

It noted that Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium is below the 300-kilogram cap set by the JCPOA and that Iran has not enriched uranium above the limit of 3.67 percent uranium-235, far below the 90 percent level considered useful for weapons purposes. The report

noted that the agency has had access to "all the sites and locations in Iran which it needed to visit".

Amano also continued to defend the importance of the IAEA's independence in evaluating information related to its efforts to monitor peaceful nuclear activities. He emphasized that the agency "undertakes analysis and takes action in an impartial, independent, and objective manner".

Amano's March 4 statement is not the first time that he pushed back against attempts by some nations to direct the IAEA's verification work. "If attempts are made to micromanage or put pressure on the agency in nuclear verification, that is counterproductive and extremely harmful," he said, adding that "independent, impartial, and factual safeguards implementation is essential to maintain our credibility".

Although Amano did not identify specific states, Israeli officials repeatedly called on the IAEA to visit undeclared sites in Iran and follow up on materials that Israel stole from an Iranian archive in January 2018 and shared with the agency later in the year. In September at the UN General Assembly, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu specifically called on the IAEA to visit a site identified by Israeli intelligence as housing materials and documents related to Iran's past nuclear weapons program. (See ACT, October 2018.)

Taken together, as the New York Times emphasizes, the findings and the demand for more intrusive inspections "take the standoff between Washington and Tehran into new territory".

U.S. President Trump's decision to abandon what he called a "terrible deal" has backfired for now. Iran has moved from complying with the accord's strict limits on uranium production to beginning to rebuild its stockpile.

Iran's leaders appear to have allowed the IAEA to document these violations, which are likely to drive home the fact that it is responding to Mr. Trump's pressure campaign with one of its own.

"The situation is a paradox," Mr. Grossi said in a recent interview in Washington, his first since taking over at the IAEA. "What we're verifying is the gradual diminishing compliance with the agreement we're supposed to be verifying." [IDN-InDepthNews – 06 March 2020]

## Uncertainty Haunts the Future of Non-Proliferation Treaty and Disarmament

*Viewpoint by Tariq Rauf \**



*Photo courtesy of UNITAR Hiroshima Office.*

HIROSHIMA (IDN)—August 6 and August 9 will mark the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. No sentient human being who has met or seen the hibakusha (survivors), or visited the hypocentres in the two cities, or seen the photographic evidence of the destruction of these two Japanese cities, can avoid being shocked and horrified by the devastation that nuclear weapons inflicted.

Up until now, Hiroshima and Nagasaki mercifully remain the only instances in which nuclear weapons have been used in war; however, it has been the hope that the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki serves as a constant reminder why preventing the further use and proliferation of such weapons – and why nuclear disarmament leading eventually to a nuclear-weapon-free world – is of utmost importance for the survival of humankind and planet Earth.

Unfortunately, the vision of ridding the world of nuclear weapons is receding as the nuclear arms control architecture patiently built up over the past 50 years is collapsing before our eyes. On 2 August 2019, the United States formally withdrew from the 1987 Treaty on Shorter- and Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) – foreshadowed in July 2019 by the Russian Federation suspending its compliance with the treaty. Under the INF Treaty, by May 1991, 2692 ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5500 kilometers had been eliminated, 1846 by the USSR and 846 by the United States under mutual verification—and nearly 5000 nuclear warheads removed from active service.

This leaves only one nuclear arms reduction treaty in force between Moscow and Washington—the New

Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START)—that was signed on 8 April 2010, entered into force on 5 February 2011. By 4 February 2018, both Russia and the United States had verifiably met the central limits of 1550 accountable deployed strategic nuclear warheads and 700 deployed launchers (land- and sea-based intercontinental ballistic missiles and long-range bombers). In fact, on 1 July 2019, under New START, Russia had 524 deployed launchers carrying 1461 nuclear warheads, and the United States had 656 warheads on 1365 launchers.

New START will expire on 5 February 2021, unless extended by Presidents Putin and Trump. Should New START not be extended, it will leave Moscow and Washington without any bilateral nuclear arms control treaty for the first time in over a half-century and likely lead to a dangerous new nuclear arms race.

For the first time in the history of Soviet/Russian-United States nuclear arms control not only are existing agreements being dismantled but the two sides have not been engaging on new measures for nearly a decade now; and both sides are modernizing nuclear arsenals and have lowered the threshold of nuclear weapon use in their declaratory and operational policies.

Furthermore, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has not entered into force 24 years after it was opened for signature in 1996. The 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) has been unnecessarily rejected by 38 States that continue to rely on nuclear deterrence and they strongly object to the efforts of the vast majority of United Nations member States to implement effective measures for nuclear disarmament.

The negotiation of global treaties on the verified production ban on fissile material for nuclear weapons and on the non-weaponization of space have not started, and many other nuclear disarmament commitments remain unfulfilled while at the same time nuclear dangers are increasing.

The architecture and fundamentals of bilateral and multilateral nuclear arms control have been eroded by the events just noted, by the United States withdrawal in 2002 from the crucial Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty, and by the failure of the five nuclear-weapon States—China, France, Russia, United Kingdom and United States—to fully honour the commitments on nuclear arms reductions agreed in the framework of the 1995/2000/2010 NPT review conferences.

One also may note that the EU/E3+3-Iran Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) has been abandoned by the United States leading to Iran stepping out of constraints on uranium enrichment, thereby further destabilizing the security situation in the region of the Middle East and raising the prospect of yet another war.

Doctrines of some nuclear-armed States now posit first or early use of nuclear weapons. The United States Defence Department's new nuclear weapons guidance, Nuclear Operations (11 June 2019) clearly posits that "using nuclear weapons could create conditions for decisive results and the restoration of strategic stability."

For its part, Russian military doctrine envisions "escalation to de-escalate" in countering superior NATO conventional forces, that is early but limited use of nuclear weapons. In South Asia, both India and Pakistan also contemplate use of nuclear weapons in a regional conflict.

It is highly disturbing that when nuclear weapon use is discussed, the vocabulary used is very often conveniently sanitized. The destruction by thermonuclear war and resulting humanitarian and environmental consequences are downplayed and substituted by antiseptic concepts of nuclear deterrence.

The grim reality is that more than 14,000 nuclear warheads of the nine nuclear-armed States are deployed at more than 100 locations in 14 States, the dangers of nuclear weapon use are increasing, and there are stocks of nearly 1,400 tonnes (or 1,400,000 kg) of weapon-grade uranium and 500 tonnes (or 500,000 kg) of weapon-usable plutonium good for more than 130,000 nuclear warheads. Remember, it takes 25 kg or less of highly-enriched uranium and 8 kg or less of plutonium for one nuclear warhead.

Not surprisingly, it is the view of many erstwhile personalities such as William Perry, former United States defence secretary, among others, that in today's world the dangers of inadvertent, accidental or even deliberate use of nuclear weapons is higher than it was during the height of the Cold War.

The Gorbachev-Reagan understanding of December 1987 that a "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought" is no longer in the forefront of the minds of today's leaders and nuclear war planners.

This year the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists set the clock (which puts into context how close we are to nuclear catastrophe) at 100 seconds to midnight; closer to catastrophe than any year of the Cold War.

We might well ask why we find ourselves in such a dire predicament, especially since there was much talk about a peace dividend and new world order at the beginning of the 1990s when the Cold War ended and there was the promise of reducing the role of nuclear weapons in international security, the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was extended indefinitely in 1995, the CTBT completed in 1996, the five nuclear-weapon States had agreed to an "unequivocal undertaking" to nuclear disarmament and a plan of action to that effect at the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, respectively?

The principal reason is that the NPT nuclear-weapon States have not fulfilled their nuclear disarmament commitments as agreed under the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its 1995/2000/2010 review conferences—albeit, both Russia and the United States claim that they have reduced their nuclear arsenals by about 80% over their Cold War heights—but both are busy modernizing their nuclear arsenals and lowering the threshold of nuclear war and have more than 1000 nuclear warheads on ready to launch operational status.

The NPT will mark its 50th anniversary in 2020 and alarm bells already are ringing warning about impending failure of this year's crucial NPT review conference. Returning to nuclear disarmament in the context of the NPT, the field is now crowded with several competing approaches: the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) NPT States favour a three-phase time bound "plan of action", in contrast the Western States stand by a "step-by-step" approach which has been slightly modified by a cross-cutting group called the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) that calls for "building blocks"; while another such group, the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) supports a "taking forward nuclear disarmament" approach; Sweden has proposed "stepping stones"; and the United States has advanced the concept of "creating the environment for nuclear disarmament" (CEND)

These different approaches clashed at the 2018-2019 sessions of the Preparatory Committee and these competing views will be manifest at the 2020 NPT Review Conference—that will mark the 50th anniversary of the NPT.

The United States has held two meetings of CEND and a third is planned for early April. Many diplomats who attended did so because they could not "refuse" the United States' invitation, others though sceptical did not want to be left out, and some were loyal troopers intoxicated by the promise of CEND as a "God send" to rescue the NPT.

A sober assessment of the CEND approach suggests that this initiative is geared to transfer the focus and responsibility for the "environment" and "conditions" for nuclear disarmament from the nuclear-armed to the non-nuclear-weapon States.

In fact, the CEND approach as presently formulated is serving the cause of "creating conditions to never disarm", because it is neither considering implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments already on the books nor operational doctrine of early use of (low yield) nuclear weapons.

The CEND approach states that the current environment is not conducive to nuclear disarmament. Such a view reflects amnesia, as many important multilateral and bilateral nuclear arms control and disarmament treaties were concluded during the height of the mistrust of the Cold War — including the NPT!

Hence, it would be appropriate to characterize CEND approach as based on "dreaming of rainbows, butterflies and unicorns to appear magically and sprinkle fairy

dust leading to a new fantasy world of nuclear arms control".

A senior United States official recently characterized supporters of nuclear disarmament in the framework of the NPT as "dim bulbs", in other words as grossly stupid and their attitudes as "some admixture of stupidity and insanity". Never has the level of discourse sunk so abysmally low, or abuse hurled so openly! If senior officials apparently are becoming unhinged and the level of discourse sinks into the gutter; this obviously cannot portend well for developing common ground between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states at the NPT review conference in two months from now.

Placing one's faith in the "rainbows, butterflies and unicorns" of the CEND approach is not the way forward to save the world from the dangers of nuclear destruction! Faithfully implementing nuclear disarmament obligations in the framework of the NPT is the only way forward to salvation. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is on the verge of transmuting into a pandemic. Some arms control officials seemingly might be on the verge of losing their equanimity?

Thus, perhaps we should seriously consider that the NPT review conference this year on its 50th anniversary, presently scheduled for New York from 27 April to 22 May, is postponed to next year (2021) and convened in Vienna (Austria)—the historic city of global conferences. Doing so should provide not only a civilized safe venue but also calmer heads and hopefully a less politically charged milieu to deliberate on matters of nuclear disarmament.

A world without nuclear weapons still remains a far-off goal and we need to heed the call of Pope Francis when during his visit to this city he clearly voiced his demand that world powers renounce their nuclear arsenals. He declared that both the use and possession of atomic bombs an "immoral" crime and a dangerous waste.

Let us recall Pope Francis' lament in Hiroshima (last November): "How can we speak of peace even as we build terrifying new weapons of war? How can we propose peace if we constantly invoke the threat of nuclear war as a legitimate recourse for the resolution of conflicts? May the abyss of pain endured here remind us of boundaries that must never be crossed".

*\* Tariq Rauf is former Head of Nuclear Verification and Security Policy at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna, and former Alternate Head of the IAEA Delegation to the NPT.. [IDN-InDepthNews – 27 February 2020]*

## US Abrogation of Iran Deal Leaves a Puzzling Legacy

*By Bernhard Schell*



ISTANBUL (IDN) – Iran has been bashed for its January 5 announcement that it would no longer abide by certain "operational restrictions" on uranium enrichment in the nuclear deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action or JCPOA. The declaration has also prompted doubts about the regime's activities and intentions and the fate of the nuclear deal.

"These questions are best understood in the context of the structure of the

JCPOA, a deal built on Iran's commitment that its nuclear activities would be exclusively peaceful," says Ernest J. Moniz, Co-Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI).

In a Q&A, he explicates: "First, Iran has biting restrictions on its nuclear activities, some time-limited and others in perpetuity. Second, and more important, Iran is subject to a unique comprehensive verification regime, with the international inspectors granted capabilities available to them nowhere else."

Moniz refutes the widespread view that Iran's announcement was a response to the killing of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani. "The timing was coincidental to the killing of Soleimani. In May 2019, one year after the United States unilaterally withdrew from the JCPOA, President Hassan Rouhani announced that Iran would begin stepping back from some of its commitments and would announce additional steps away from the deal every 60 days, unless the remaining JCPOA partners delivered promised sanctions relief."

The NTI Co-Chair adds: "Iran deemed the subsequent steps taken by the E3/EU countries – France, Germany, and Britain, and the European Union – 'insufficient'. Its 'fifth and final' announcement came on January 5, as expected."

He urges the international community to work to reinvigorate diplomacy to address the Iranian nuclear challenge. Recent actions by Britain, France, and Germany to trigger the 'dispute resolution mechanism' may serve this purpose, he said, "but it is a risky gamble".

Other Iran experts share this view. "By triggering the Iran deal's dispute resolution mechanism, Germany, France, and the United Kingdom are hoping to push the sides back to the negotiating table—but they may escalate instead," argues columnist and foreign-policy analyst on Iran and the Middle East, Saheb Sadeghi, writing in Foreign Policy.

"At a minimum, it will be necessary for the United States to work with our European allies, as well as Russia and China, to press Iran not to further expand its nuclear program. Whether or not the JCPOA survives, the core elements of the deal should remain important touchstones for any future arrangement: well-defined restrictions on Iran's nuclear fuel cycle activities for a significant period, paired with the highest possible level of international monitoring and verification," says the NTI CEO.

Accentuating another crucial aspect, EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell has said that Europe must ensure Iran's benefits from the nuclear deal if it wants the deal to survive. "If we want the Iran nuclear deal to survive, we need to ensure that Iran benefits if it returns to full compliance," he wrote in an article in the *Project Syndicate* published on February 8.

Borrell, a Spanish Socialist, was notified in January by Paris, London and Berlin that they had deployed the dispute mechanism. He said that the EU will extend indefinitely the time limit to resolve disputes in the nuclear deal to avoid having to go to the UN Security Council or triggering new sanctions.

*[Top Image source: Forum IAS]*

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

“There is agreement that more time is needed due to the complexity of the issues involved. The timeline is therefore extended,” Borrell said in a statement on January 24.

In the meeting with Borrell in Tehran on February 3, President Rouhani criticized the EU for failing to honour its commitments after the U.S. quit the deal and reinstated sanctions on Iran. However, Rouhani said, "The Islamic Republic of Iran is still ready to cooperate with the European Union for resolving issues, and at any time that the other side (EU) fully observes its commitments Iran will also return to its commitments."

In May 2019 Iran started to reduce its commitments to the JCPOA at bi-monthly intervals in response to the abrogation of the pact by the U.S. coupled with the European Union's inaction to shield Iran's economy from choking sanctions.

Anna Sauerbrey notes in an opinion piece in the New York Times on February 10 that the Instrument in Support of Trade Exchanges (INSTEX) set up by Germany, France and Britain in January 2019 "is a prime example of the futility of Europe's struggle for strategic autonomy from the United States".

Ever since U.S. President Donald Trump withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018, "European countries have struggled to come up with an appropriate response". But in vain. Because the enormous impact of America's secondary sanctions comes not just from the market power of the United States, but also from the power of the dollar and "America's capacity to legally or factually control financial transaction systems".

Sauerbrey quotes David Jalilvand, a foreign policy expert who runs [Orient Matters](#), a Berlin-based political and economic consultancy specializing in the Middle East: "On some level, almost every company has some sort of connection with the U.S."

Even if a company doesn't operate on the U.S. market, either its bank does, or one of its insurance companies or one of the reinsurance companies backing their insurance companies. "As a consequence, even companies that do not operate on the American market are affected."

"One key, then, to Europe obtaining 'strategic autonomy' in international relations," continues Sauerbrey, "is obtaining a capacity for independent financial transactions."

Tehran has made clear in its announcements that it is taking steps while remaining "within the deal", to cease performing "in part" certain nuclear deal commitments. Iran stated that the steps could be reversed. Though it can never "re-verse" the experience gained through nuclear operations, Iran can remove and dismantle equipment and ship out or dilute the material.

According to the NTI Co-Chair, "Iran has so far continued to comply with a key element of the deal: its stringent verification and monitoring measures, including on specific non-nuclear activities needed for nuclear weapons development. If Iran chose to 'break out' of the deal or rush to build a bomb, the verification system would provide early indication."

Reports from International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors, who remain on the ground daily, suggest Iran is increasing its enrichment levels, though only minimally, but is expanding work on more efficient gas centrifuges. But the continued presence of the IAEA is interpreted to mean that the "worst case" breakout estimates, which would require Iran to use all its known facilities and materials, cannot take place without immediate detection by the UN nuclear watchdog.

As far as plutonium is concerned, which also can be used to build a bomb, Moniz maintains, Iran is abiding by limits in the nuclear deal that prohibit facilities from separating plutonium and is continuing to co-operate with China and Britain to modify its design for a new nuclear research reactor so that it will not produce suitable material for a weapon.

The atomic reactor that they were building before the JCPOA, which would have produced enough plutonium annually for one or two bombs, has been partially destroyed, underlines the NTI chief. [IDN-InDepthNews– 15 February 2020].

## Towards Nuclear Disarmament with Monitoring and Verification

*By Radwan Jakeem*



*Photo: 22 participants from 11 IPNDV partner countries gathered at Forschungszentrum Jülich in Jülich, Germany, on September 23, 2019 to participate in the Nuclear Disarmament Verification Exercise, jointly organized by France and Germany. Credit: Forschungszentrum Jülich / Tobias Schlöber.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – With the international community persistently striving for a world free of nuclear weapons, verification systems and methods are crucial to understanding the complex challenges of accurately monitoring and verifying future nuclear disarmament activities which will likely subject countries to more intrusive verification than ever before.

Learning from verification experience gained by the U.S. and Russia and dialogues at the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV), the five permanent members of the UN Security Council – USA, Russia, Britain, France and China – in particular and interested States in general can contribute to an effective nuclear weapons ban as envisaged by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

IPNDV, which started five years ago with the participation of more than 25 countries is a public-private initiative of the U.S. State Department with the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI). It is designed to build capacity among both states with and without nuclear weapons and develop technical solutions for monitoring and verification challenges.

Over the past three decades, the number of nuclear weapons has decreased considerably – reportedly to about 14,500 – from the peak arsenals of the Cold War. Key to these dramatic reductions, according to disarmament experts, has been the ability of countries

to verify each other's compliance with implementing the arms control treaties.

In order to lay a solid foundation for further reductions in nuclear weapons and advance nuclear disarmament goals enshrined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), an accurate assessment of monitoring and verification issues across the nuclear weapons lifecycle is of vital importance – from production of fissile material and warheads, warhead inventories, the dismantlement of nuclear weapons, and the disposition of nuclear material resulting from the dismantlement process.

Article VI of the NPT urges each of the Parties to the Treaty to undertake "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 on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

Since its first meeting in March 2015, the IPNDV has broken new ground in building a diverse international program of work. Working cooperatively together, the Partners with and without nuclear weapons have made valuable progress in identifying the challenges associated with nuclear disarmament verification and identifying potential procedures and technologies to address those challenges.

The primary focus of Phase I was the monitoring and inspection of a notional nuclear weapon dismantlement process, called the "Basic Dismantlement Scenario". It comprises steps 6–10 of the Nuclear Weapon Dis-mantlement Process. Those specific steps are only one part of a broader set of nuclear weapon dismantlement activities and in turn of nuclear disarmament verification.

"The Partnership has made a substantial contribution to understanding and finding approaches to solve this core challenge of nuclear disarmament verification," noted IPNDV. Specifically, the Partnership's key judgment is that:

While tough challenges remain, potentially applicable technologies, information barriers, and inspection procedures provide a path forward that should make possible multilaterally monitored nuclear warhead dismantlement while successfully managing safety, security, non-proliferation, and classification concerns in a future nuclear disarmament agreement.

Phase I of the Partnership's work concluded in November 2017 at the fifth plenary in Buenos Aires, Argentina. In Phase II, the IPNDV deepened its understanding of effective and practical verification options to support future nuclear disarmament verification and demonstrate its work through tangible activities such as exercises and demonstrations.

The IPNDV strived to increase engagement and outreach to the wider nuclear disarmament verification community, including technical and policy groups and academia. In addition, the Partnership shared its work with the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification and Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty members in preparation for the 2020 NPT Review Conference (NPT RevCon) from April 29 to May 10, 2019 at the UN Headquarters in New York.

From December 3-5, 2019, the seventh International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification plenary meeting brought 89 representatives from 24 countries, plus the European Union, to Ottawa, Canada to complete Phase II and to begin planning for Phase III.

The meeting included presentations about practical exercises and technical demonstrations that took the Partnership's findings "from paper to practice". Partners focused on technical gaps and policy questions to be addressed in Phase III with the

government of Switzerland hosting a kick-off symposium on March 18-19 in Geneva, highlighting the work of the IPNDV and its place in the broader context of nuclear disarmament verification.

The symposium and exhibition just a few weeks ahead the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference from April 27-May 22 at UN Headquarters in New York is important particularly because of its emphasis on the findings of Phase I and II of the IPNDV related to the potential role and limits of technology in nuclear disarmament verification, the utility of practical disarmament verification exercises and demonstrations, and the IPNDV's work in the broader context of nuclear disarmament.

The IPNDV's Phase II Summary Report: Moving From Paper To Practice In Nuclear Disarmament Verification, released in January 2020, addressed verification of nuclear weapon declarations, verification of reductions, and technologies for verification.

It is noteworthy that after the 7th plenary meeting in December in Ottawa, IPNDV participants visited the Canadian Nuclear Laboratories' Chalk River Site, the historical home to Canada's first nuclear reactor. They observed demonstrations of experimental techniques for verifying the presence or absence of weapons-grade nuclear materials. These are important tasks for the nuclear disarmament verification process.

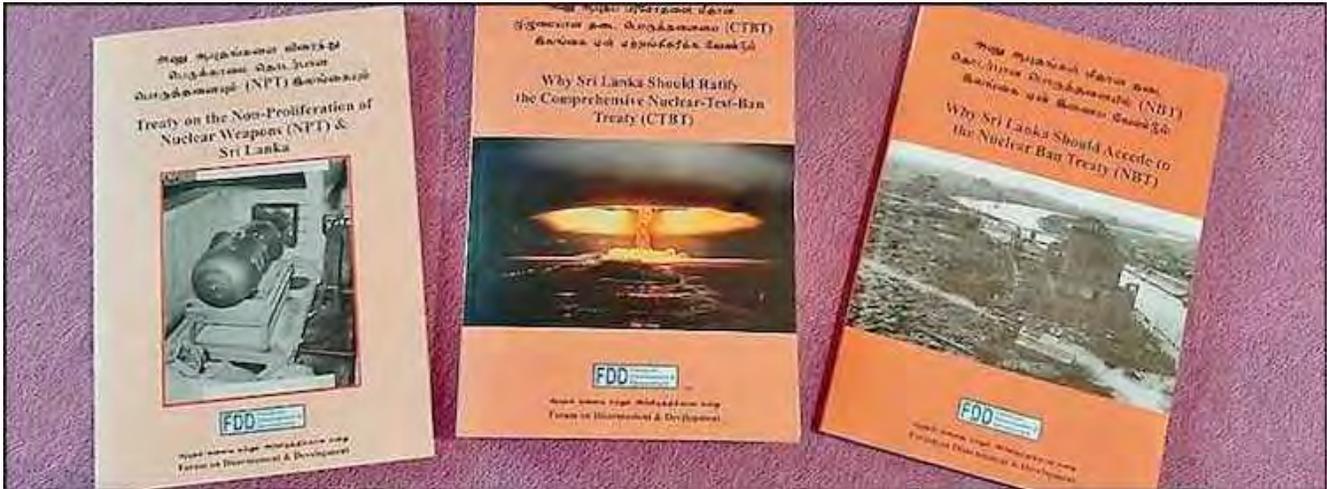
The Chalk River demonstration was one of five practical exercises and technology demonstrations conducted during Phase II to advance the Partnership's ability to identify technologies and procedures that could be applied across all stages of the nuclear weapons dismantlement lifecycle.

In addition to the exercises and demonstrations, Phase II explored how to characterize other monitoring and verification considerations such as state declarations and treaty limitations.

These activities ultimately reinforced the findings of Phase I that multilateral verification of nuclear dismantlement is possible, although it will be challenging and will require a tailored application of verification options—tools, policies, and procedures—to prevent disclosure of proliferation-sensitive safety and security as well as external factors unique to a given country's nuclear weapons enterprise. [IDN- InDepthNews – 14 February 2020]

## Sri Lanka Committed to Non-Proliferation and Disarmament

*By Jaya Ramachandran*



*Collage courtesy of Sri Lanka's Daily FT*

GENEVA | COLOMBO (IDN) – In an exceptional move, Germany has granted funds to Sri Lanka’s Forum on Disarmament and Development (FDD) for the translation of the texts of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty (CTBT) to the island state’s official languages Sinhala and Tamil. NPT and CTBT texts were until now available only in official languages of the United Nations: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

The NPT and CTBT texts are included in two publications. The third publication relates to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala, former United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs and FDD Patron, has provided the foreword to the three publications.

The publications on the CTBT and NBT highlight the importance of Sri Lanka’s ratification and accession to the CTBT and TPNW without delay, in order to underline the country’s support and commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

In the past, Sri Lanka has taken a position of leadership in the nuclear disarmament sector; particularly in 1995, when Ambassador Dhanapala chaired the historic NPT Review and Extension Conference.

Sri Lanka signed the NPT on July 1, 1968 and ratified it on March 5, 1979. The country signed the CTBT on October 24, 1996, however, is yet to ratify it. Further, Sri Lanka is also yet to accede to the TPNW which opened for signature on September 20, 2017.

The NPT which entered into force in 1970 is a landmark international treaty aiming to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

The CTBT adopted by UN General Assembly in 1996 bans nuclear explosions by everyone, everywhere: on the Earth's surface, in the atmosphere, underwater and under-ground. With 184 states joining, it is almost universal. But 44 specific nuclear technology holder countries must sign and ratify before the Treaty can enter into force. Of these, eight are still missing: China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the USA. India, North Korea and Pakistan have yet to sign the CTBT.

The TPNW includes a comprehensive set of prohibitions on participating in any nuclear weapon activities. These include under-takings not to develop, test, produce, acquire, possess, stockpile, use or threaten to use nuclear weapons. The Treaty also prohibits the deployment of nuclear weapons on national territory and the provision of assistance to any State in the conduct of prohibited activities. States parties will be obliged to prevent and suppress any activity prohibited under the TPNW under-taken by persons or on territory -under its jurisdiction or control.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

Launching the translated texts middle of January, Ambassador Jörn Rohde of Germany spoke of his personal reflections during his posting in Japan on visiting Hiroshima. Together with Nagasaki, Hiroshima suffered in 1945 the first ever and so far the only atomic bombings in history. Germany, he said, is committed to disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

However, experts point out that Germany is among the powers which possess the ability to create nuclear weapons, though since World War II it has generally refrained from producing those weapons also because of the NPT. But Germany participates in the NATO nuclear weapons sharing arrangements and trains for delivering United States nuclear weapons.

Besides, along with most other industrial nations, Germany produces components that can be used for creating deadly agents, chemical weapons, and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Alongside other companies from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, India, the United States, Belgium, Spain, and Brazil, German companies provided Iraq with precursors of chemical agents used by Iraq to engage in chemical warfare during the Iran-Iraq War.

Ambassador Rohde expressed the hope that the NPT and CTBT texts now made available in the vernacular languages will help raise awareness amongst the academia, the media, civil society and the general public for a wider discussion and understanding of the implications of a nuclearized world, the need for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and also the need for a ban on nuclear testing. FDD is purported “to encourage and assist Sri Lanka in becoming a leader in humanitarian disarmament in Asia and to make visible the link [bet-ween] disarmament and development”.

Though Sri Lanka is seldom on the radar in multiple deliberations on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, security is of vital significance for the island state separated by the Palk Strait from India. Both nations occupy a strategic position in South Asia and have sought to build a common security umbrella in the Indian Ocean.

The nuclear rivalry between India and Pakistan – which has a coastline along the Arabian Sea and Gulf of Oman in the south and bordered by India to the east, Afghanistan to the west, Iran to the southwest, and China in the northeast – is of vital importance to Sri Lanka, which does not possess nuclear weapons. Of enormous significance is also the interest of the U.S. and other NATO states and of China and Russia in the Indian Ocean.

Against this backdrop, the NPT which will be reviewed after five years at the United Nations head-quarters in New York from April 27-May 22 is of particular interest to Sri Lanka. The previous Review Conference in 2015 ended without the adoption of a consensus and therefore a substantive outcome.

As Sri Lanka’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva, Ambassador A.L.A. Azeez points out, the NPT is “the global regime for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament”. It ensures “a balanced and non-discriminatory approach to building international peace and security, while safeguarding the economic development prospects for all, through equal access to technology advancing peaceful uses”. Therefore, Sri Lanka supports “all efforts towards achieving the universalization of the NPT as the legal regime that enjoys the participation of the largest number of Member States of the United Nations including the P5 (USA, Russia, China, Britain and France)”.

Ambassador Azeez added: “We also support the call for application of the full scope of the IAEA safeguards to ensure meaningful implementation of the provisions in the Treaty. Lack of progress in the effective implementation of Article VI is a worrying trend.” Article VI states: Each party “undertakes 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 on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control”.

It is widely agreed that this objective has yet to be achieved. On the other hand, as a political observer said, the incipient nuclear arms race is threatening international peace and security in the face of pressing need for financing sustainable development. In early 2019, there were an estimated 13,890 nuclear weapons.

Back in 1996, commenting on the Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, Judge Christopher Weeramantry of Sri Lanka emphasized in a widely appreciated dissenting Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) – the World Court. Accordingly, “the threat or use of nuclear weapons is illegal in any circumstances whatsoever as it is a violation of international humanitarian law”. [IDN-InDepthNews – 31 January 2020]

## The G20 Should Have Nuclear Disarmament on Their Agenda

*Viewpoint by Herbert Wulf\**



*Photo: G20 leaders in a group photo at the start of the G20 Osaka Summit, 28 June 2019. Source: Japan's PR Office.*

DUISBURG, Germany (IDN) – Right now, two critical developments are literally threatening the very existence of humankind: the climate crisis and the possibility of nuclear war. There is a broad consensus when it comes to the severity of climate change, even if there is still absolutely no sign of a solution despite the affirmations by many governments.

But at least the climate debate is a lively one, accompanied by countless demonstrations against policies that are damaging to the environment.

By contrast, the risk of nuclear disaster has largely disappeared from the public consciousness. The peace movement and the end of the Cold War at least led to a temporary turnaround in policy, but this has long given way to rearmament on an unprecedented scale.

Although the number of nuclear warheads has decreased, from over 70,000 at the end of the Cold War to fewer than 14,000 today, this is still more than enough to lay waste to the world several times over.

Above all, however, it is the modernisation of weapons in the U.S., China and Russia and the nuclear ambitions of countries like Israel, North Korea, India and Pakistan that have increased the risk of armed conflict and the potential for the use of nuclear weapons.

Accordingly, military spending is rising sharply: At over USD 1,800bn a year, it is now more than 50 per cent higher than it was during the last days of the Cold War. It's only natural to ask where this will lead us in a situation when NATO demands a further hike in spending, China seeks to keep pace with the rest of the world, Russia makes aggressive overtures towards some of its neighbours, India responds to China and the Saudis and Iran fuel the arms race in the Middle East.

The connections between climate and armaments policy are most clearly illustrated by the wars and violent conflicts in recent decades, the resulting refugee movements and migrant flows and the backlash that has followed. Although the risks of climate change and arms build-up are well known, there are currently no signs of a turnaround. Like lemmings jumping off the cliff, these two crises are heading for a disaster that appears unavoidable.

The old world order, with its semi-functioning multilateralism and compromise in a spirit of give and take, have been superseded by nationalist aspirations and the reckless pursuit of supposed self-interest – and we are seeing climate agreements being questioned and even revoked, while arms controls forums and corresponding treaties are allowed to slide.

There's no question that the arms control treaties of the 1980s and 1990s between the then major powers, the Soviet Union/Russia and the U.S., are now something of an anachronism. Today, systemic antagonism is no longer the issue; instead, the unchecked arms race represents a threat to humankind in its entirety. This is why geopolitically ambitious powers like China, India and Saudi Arabia need to be included in arms control efforts if the catastrophic trends are to be reversed.

Now, the [Group of Twenty \(G20\)](#) summits are one 'natural' forum for achieving this. The 19 member countries of the G20 and the EU are responsible for 82 per cent of global military spending. The G20 accounts for almost all arms exports, and its arsenals are home to 98 per cent of the world's nuclear warheads.

The geopolitical interests in Europe, Southeast Asia and the Middle East that are driving rearmament and even arms races are bundled in the G20.

The members of this exclusive club are also the main perpetrators of global warming. And the climate change deniers can be found there too. The 19 members – the U.S., Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Russia, Turkey, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, India, China, Japan, Indonesia, South Korea and Australia – bear the primary responsibility for the current catastrophic trends.

So why do the regular G20 summits never address the topics of disarmament and arms control? How can the lemmings be persuaded to come to a halt and turn around? In principle, there are three possibilities: Scientifically substantiated risk analyses, i.e. appealing to their reason; public pressure and an insistence on upholding their inherent values; and, above all, respect for human rights and international law even in the face of opposition.

Scientific analyses and public pressure are currently being used as a response to the climate crisis. The vast majority of scientific studies have identified what needs to be done and where in order to trigger a reversal in the trend. But governments – albeit by no means all of them – have only begun taking more serious action since the 'Fridays for Future' movement gathered pace and the scientific warnings and popular protest combined to form a movement that can no longer be ignored.

It could be that the lack of high-profile protests against the current military armament is one reason why there are no disarmament and arms control forums. The causes and risks of violent conflicts, the damaging side-effects of arms exports, the present danger of nuclear war – they have all been researched and documented in numerous studies, and yet the momentum for arms control that prevailed in the 1990s is nowhere to be seen. There is a lack of scientific analysis of the risks of war, a lack of political and economic warnings against continued armament and, quite simply, a lack of high-profile support for the peace movement.

The G20 should be the target of any such protest movement. When the perpetrators of the crisis gather for the next summit in Saudi Arabia in November 2020, they will have to be forced to acknowledge the demands of a loud protest movement if things are to change for the better. A call to 'Disarm the G20!' might finally shake up the main players in the climate and arms crisis.

This includes upholding the aforementioned values even among a disunited community. While European nations continue to sell arms to countries like Turkey and Saudi Arabia and hold their tongue when it comes to violations of human rights in China and elsewhere, there can be little hope of any forward-thinking resolutions on the part of the G20.

Merely paying lip service to European values, coupled with a fear of jeopardising the business of a handful of defence firms, oil companies and car manufacturers, will not be enough to prevent the disasters that are threatening the very existence of humankind. [IDN-InDepthNews – 10 January 2020]

*\* Herbert Wulf was Director of The Bonn Inter-national Center for Conversion (BICC) from its foundation in 1994 until 2001. He is currently a senior fellow at BICC.*

## Youth to The Front for Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

*By J Nastranis*



*Photo: The second training on Conflict Prevention through Arms Control, Disarmament and Non-proliferation jointly organized by UNODA and the OSCE in May 2019 at Vienna International Centre. Credit: UNODA, Vienna Office.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – UN Secretary-General António Guterres in his Agenda for Disarmament on May 24, 2018 underlined the need to establish a platform for youth engagement.

This would include “a cadre of youth from around the world,” who will work assiduously to promote disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control in their communities.

Engaging with youth groups and community organizations in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals with synergistic linkages to youth, disarmament and non-proliferation education and conflict prevention is the second pillar of the platform for youth engagement.

The third pillar are disarmament and non-proliferation training modules hosted on the online dashboard of the Vienna bureau of the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) targeting young diplomats and other youth leaders for knowledge enhancement and capacity-building.

On September 24, 2018 the Secretary-General launched Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy accentuating that young people are “agents of change” and that the young generation is “the ultimate force for change” and proposing actions to promote youth engagement.

The Secretary-General tasked his Envoy on Youth, in conjunction with the UN system and youth themselves, to lead development of a UN Youth Strategy. Its aim: scale up global, regional and national actions to meet young people’s needs, realize their rights and tap their possibilities as agents of change.

On December 12, 2019 the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution on Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The resolution was introduced by the Republic of Korea and co-sponsored by 42 additional governments including a mix of nuclear-armed, nuclear allied and non-nuclear countries.

The resolution calls on governments, UN agencies and civil society to educate, engage and empower youth in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation. As such, it aims to provide impetus for non-governmental organizations to develop youth-focused and youth-led programs in cooperation with the United Nations and with support of governments.

The platform for youth engagement and diverse programmes launched by the Secretary-General have been reflected the deep concern of the young people about existential threats posed not only by global warming but also nuclear weapons which are the most inhumane and indiscriminate weapons ever created.

They violate international law, cause severe environmental damage, undermine national and global security, and divert vast public resources away from meeting human needs.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

As the 2017 nuclear peace laureate International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) emphasises, single nuclear warhead could kill hundreds of thousands of people, with lasting and devastating humanitarian and environmental consequences. Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea possess an estimated total of nearly 14,000 nuclear weapons, most of which are many times more powerful than the nuclear weapon dropped on Hiroshima. Thirty-one other states are also part of the problem.

Young people play a crucial role in the activities of ICAN, a coalition of non-governmental organizations promoting adherence to and implementation of the United Nations nuclear weapon ban treaty.

On July 7, 2017, an overwhelming majority of the world's nations adopted a landmark global agreement to ban nuclear weapons, known officially as the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). It will enter into legal force once 50 nations have signed and ratified it. Meanwhile, 34 nations have ratified the Treaty.

Existing Treaties involved in the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), South Pacific (Treaty of Rarotonga), Southeast Asia (Treaty of Bangkok), Africa (Treaty of Pelindaba), and Central Asia as well as Mongolia, are contributing their share to a nuclear weapons free world.

But the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free Of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction has been eluding the international community. The Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction held its First Session from November 18-22, 2019 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York under the presidency of Ambassador Sima Bahous of Jordan. The Conference adopted a Political Declaration and its Final Report.

With the support of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the UN on December 9, hosted a session of the Nuclear Discussion Forum on outcomes of the First Session.

The Second Session of the Conference is scheduled to take place from November 16-20 November 2020 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Apart from official actions at the UN Headquarters in New York, young people have been taking part in several activities initiated by non-governmental organisations gathered in UNFOLD ZERO.

During the UN Disarmament Week from October 24-30, 2019 a team of volunteers (mostly youth) in New York City counted out \$542 billion – the approximate global nuclear weapons budget for the next five years – and symbolically reallocated this to climate protection, poverty alleviation and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The action was initiated by the World Future Council and organised by Peace Accelerators, a youth-led network of 'ethical futurists and entrepreneurs' working for a sustainable future.

The money was counted in various locations around the city, including at the United Nations in cooperation with students from the School Strike for Climate Movement, in front of New York City (NYC) Town Hall to support divestment of NYC pension funds from the nuclear weapons industry; outside the office of Jacobs Engineering a nuclear weapons contractor; and at Strawberry Fields in honour of peacemaker John Lennon. Youth from around the world who were unable to come to New York for the event, posted social media memes in support.

The Basel Peace Office and Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament initiated a new project Youth Voices On Climate, Peace And Nuclear Disarmament, in cooperation with the Abolition 2000 Youth Network. The project includes:

Climate, peace and security: From youth voices to policy action, a roundtable event in Basel on January 9, 2020 bringing legislators and experts together with European youth leaders in the climate, peace and disarmament movements;

Video Project: Youth voices on climate, peace and disarmament, a compilation of youth video statements about climate, peace, security and nuclear disarmament and the role of the European Union, United Nations and Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE);

Peace and Climate action of European Youth (PACEY) Award, a new prize of €5000 to support a European youth project or proposal for action on climate, peace and nuclear disarmament. [IDN-InDepthNews – 28 December 2019]

## Rising Concern in Russia About Spiralling Arms Race

*By Kester Kenn Klomegah*



*Photo: More than 100 US-built missiles having the capability to strike Moscow with nuclear warheads were deployed in Italy and Turkey in 1961. In August 1963, the US joined the Soviet Union and United Kingdom in agreeing to ban nuclear explosions in the atmosphere, outer space, or under water, and places significant restrictions on detonating nuclear devices underground. The Limited Test Ban Treaty reflects concerns about the dangers of nuclear fallout. A high-speed “hotline” connecting the leaders of the Soviet and U.S. governments is established to mitigate the risk of accidental warfare. Credit: Wikimedia Commons.*

MOSCOW (IDN) – Russia is convinced that proliferation risks and threats that are rampant today can be eliminated by the strict observance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), while respecting and ensuring the balance between its three components: nonproliferation, disarmament and peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The NPT will be reviewed in May 2020 at an international conference at the UN Headquarters in New York. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov considers it crucial that the upcoming conference is held “as non-confrontationally as possible and not repeat the sad experience of the 2015 conference, when in fact, the participants refused to talk to each other and even to listen to each other, and each stated their position independently of what the others were saying”.

“This was the reason for a rather dangerous and at the same time illusory trend to prevail, namely to ‘force’ the nuclear powers to abandon their existing nuclear arsenals without taking into account their security interests and strategic realities. This approach led to an accelerated drafting of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) which was open for signature,” Lavrov said in remarks at an international conference in Moscow on November 8, 2019.

“Russia does not plan to accede to this treaty,” Lavrov emphasised. “We share the goal of building a nuclear-free world. However, this goal should not be achieved by the unilateral, rather arrogant methods on which this document is based. We presume that the complete elimination of nuclear weapons is possible only in the context of general and complete disarmament where equal and indivisible security is ensured for all, including nations with nuclear weapons, in accordance with the NPT,” he added.

Professor Aslan Abashidze, Head of the Department of International Law of the Russian University of Peoples' Friendship and Member of the Scientific Advisory Board under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs told IDN that the U.S. has been walking out of several treaties with Russia and its western partners signed over the years after tough negotiations.

"Among the remaining international strategic treaties, an important one is the Treaty on Open Skies, which ... creates trusted relations primarily between nuclear powers. Unfortunately, the White House has repeatedly voiced its intention to unilaterally withdraw from this agreement," Professor Abashidze told IDN.

At the same time, the fate of a follow-up on the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), he added, is hanging in the balance. It was signed on April 8, 2010 in Prague and, after ratification, entered into force on February 5, 2011. It expires 2021.

Professor Abashidze lamented that Washington is not responding to Russia's call to engage in substantive discussions on the extension of the Treaty. But there are no protests in the West similar to those in 1980s against the arms race between the U.S. and then Soviet Union.

Professor Abashidze warned that impending "uncontrolled arms race" will not only cause untold suffering to everyone in the U.S. and the Russian Federation and beyond, but also harm the mechanism of international control of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction – a development fraught with unpredictable and irreparable consequences, "if not a nuclear catastrophe".

Equally of grave concern is the suspension of the INF Treaty. On October 20, 2018, U.S. President Donald Trump announced his intention to "terminate" the Treaty citing Russian noncompliance and concerns about China's intermediate-range missile arsenal.

Experts believe that the door is not yet closed on the INF Treaty. "The Americans gave official notification about their pullout six months in advance and after that the document has remained in effect for six months," Deputy Director of the CIS Countries Institute and Military Expert, Vladimir Yevseyev, told Russia's *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*.

"Once the deadline expires, the document becomes null and void. This is how the pullout process would work. Usually, the move is justified by citing alleged threats to national interests or national security. We have failed to reach a compromise because the United States' position was unconstructive from the very beginning. Washington first decided to withdraw from the treaty and then started looking for reasons," he added.

According to Yevseyev, "The move to leave the document stems from Pentagon experts' assessments, which showed that the U.S. is incapable of creating ground-based hypersonic missiles with a range of over 5,500 kilometers. After that, tensions started escalating."

As far back as in May 2019, Russia's *Izvestia* financial newspaper said that Putin's INF suspension bill was to act as signal for the global community. Russia reserves the right to resume the implementation of the INF Treaty at any moment despite the bill on suspending the agreement, Russian parliamentarians told *Izvestia* newspaper.

According to experts, the draft legislation submitted by Russian President Vladimir Putin on May 30 was a signal for the international community that Moscow was ready to maintain the status quo, but it plans to fully ensure its security giving a tit-for-tat response to Washington's steps.

Deputy Chairman of the State Duma Committee on International Affairs, Alexey Chepa, has explained: "We reserve the right to restore the deal, if the other party does this. Unfortunately, the Americans are interested in fueling tensions in Europe so that NATO countries earmark more money for military spending," the lawmaker added.

"Besides, there is a powerful lobby in the U.S. consisting of companies and politicians. They want to take advantage of the Treaty's suspension and start manufacturing weapons and obtaining more funds. This may increase tensions on the international arena."

Chepa expects a serious rift among NATO countries on the suspension of the INF Treaty. Some countries, which are ardent supporters of U.S. foreign policy, such as Poland and the Baltic states, may agree to the deployment of U.S. weapons on their soil, while other European countries are likely to adopt a measured approach and will hardly agree to become "a U.S. foothold", he said.

Senior Research Fellow at the Primakov Institute of International and World Economy, Sergey Malashenkov, told IDN: Given the irreversible fact that in Europe, American missiles previously banned under the INF accord, could be deployed in NATO member-states, and Asia – in Japan or South Korea where U.S. military bases are situated. These intermediate-range missiles can be fired directly from the U.S. For example, from Alaska, which is separated from Russia by the Bering Strait, which is just about 82 kilometres wide.

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, who signed the INF Treaty with U.S. President Ronald Reagan in December 1987, is warning of possible chaos and unpredictability in global politics, as a result of the suspension of the Treaty.

He wrote in an article published by Vedomosti, that "today, everything that was achieved in the years after we had put an end to the Cold War is in great danger" as "the United States' decision to withdraw from the INF Treaty may reverse the situation".

"In order to justify its stance, the U.S. points to the intermediate-range missiles that other countries have, namely China, Iran and North Korea. But it does not seem convincing as the U.S. and Russia still own more than 90% of the world's nuclear weapons. In this connection, our two countries remain the superpowers.

"Other countries' nuclear arsenals are 10 to 15 times smaller. Clearly, if the nuclear arms reduction process had continued, other nations, including the United Kingdom, France and China, would have had to join it at some point," Gorbachev concluded.

In his view, Washington's true intention for exiting the arms reduction deal seems different. "The U.S. seeks to free itself from all restrictions in the arms field and achieve total military dominance." However, "one country's hegemony is impossible in today's world," the ex-Soviet president emphasized.

Gorbachev called on members of the U.S. Congress to launch dialogue with Russia on the nuclear weapons issue. "I regret that the scathing domestic political climate that has emerged in the U.S. in recent years has disrupted dialogue between our countries on an entire range of issues, including nuclear weapons. It's time to overcome inter-party differences and start a serious conversation," Gorbachev said.

"The politicians needed to assess the current situation and make sure that their actions would not set off a new arms race," he added. [IDN-InDepthNews – 18 December 2019]

## Middle Eastern States Are Back on The Path to A WMD Free Zone

*Viewpoint by Sergio Duarte*

*The writer is President of Pugwash and former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.*



*Photo: Twenty-five years since the 1994 Nobel Peace Prize shared by Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat – who negotiated and signed the Oslo Peace Accords – peace continues to evade the Middle East, Palestine-Israel relations remain tense and a Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Zone in the region is nowhere in sight. The picture shows Rabin (left) shaking hands with Arafat (right) at the World Economic Forum in Davos, 2001 | Credit: CC BY-SA World Economic Forum.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the region of the Middle East has been one of the most frustrating undertakings in the field of arms control and non-proliferation at the United Nations. Over the past few decades it has been possible for States in other regions of the globe to successfully negotiate and adopt treaties that establish nuclear weapon free zones that greatly enhance peace and security.

These weapons were first banned in uninhabited places such as the Antarctic, outer space and the ocean floor. In 1967 Latin America and the Caribbean pioneered the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone (as part of the Treaty of Tlatelolco) in a populated region and their example was later emulated by the South Pacific (Treaty of Rarotonga), Southeast Asia (Treaty of Bangkok), Africa (Treaty of Pelindaba) and Central Asian (Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia), plus Mongolia.

114 States, the large majority of which situated in the Southern Hemisphere, have pledged not to allow nuclear weapons in their territories and accepted other related commitments.

Despite differing historic, political, economic, cultural and security realities, all those States had at least one important element in common: none

possessed nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction.

That is not the case of the Middle East. States of the region, however, have endeavored for many years to make that project a reality.

The first resolution on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East was proposed by Iran and Egypt in 1974 and was routinely adopted every year without a vote by the General Assembly until last year. Several resolutions of the Security Council also endorsed that proposal. Similarly, since 1991 the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has adopted every year a resolution calling for the application of full scope safeguards on all nuclear facilities in the region “as a necessary step for the establishment of the NWFZ”.

In 1988, a study on measures that would facilitate the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East was undertaken by the United Nations and made recommendations on the matter, mainly in the form of confidence building measures. In 1989 the IAEA carried out a study on modalities of a safeguard system that could be applied to nuclear facilities in the region as a step toward that objective.

One important breakthrough was achieved when a resolution sponsored by the three Depositaries of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Russia, United Kingdom and United States) expanded the scope of the proposed free zone by calling for "the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems."

Agreement on that resolution, together with other elements included in a package of decisions ensured the indefinite extension of the NPT without objections at the Review and Extension Conference in 1995. Sharp disagreements between countries in the region and differing perceptions of threats and security concerns, including by other players, however, have stymied practical progress on the attainment of that objective.

In 2000, the NPT Review Conference reaffirmed that WMD free zones enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament.

The Conference regretted that little progress had been achieved and took note of the reaffirmation by the five nuclear-weapon States of their commitment to a full implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

A way forward seemed to have been reached when the 2010 NPT Conference endorsed the understanding that the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution would convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, with the full support and engagement of the nuclear-weapon States.

The Secretary-General and the co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution, in consultation with the States of the region, would appoint a Facilitator, with a mandate to support implementation of the 1995

Resolution. The Facilitator would report to the 2015 Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee meetings. Furthermore, a host Government for the 2012 Conference would be appointed.

Accordingly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon conducted a number of consultations with the three co-sponsors of the 1995 Resolution and other interested parties and appointed Finnish diplomat Jaako Laajava as Facilitator. Over the next couple of years Mr. Laajava held consultations which included Israel and other States of the region. Progress, however, remained elusive.

A new effort was attempted at the 2015 NPT Review Conference, but the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada did not support the President's proposal to convene a Middle East WMD Free Zone Conference by 2016. They argued that the proposal was not based on "consensus and equality," and contained "unworkable conditions" and "arbitrary deadlines." The Review Conference was thus unable to adopt a substantive Final Document.

The ensuing frustration led the Middle Eastern States to adopt a different strategy at the 2018 Session of the General Assembly. As the decisions of the Assembly are taken by majority vote and not by consensus – as is customary with NPT Review Conferences – Egypt introduced at the I Committee a draft resolution mandating the UN Secretary-General to convene a conference on taking forward a WMD-free zone in the Middle East in 2019 and every year thereafter until a zone is achieved.

The Resolution was adopted by 88 votes in favor and four against (Israel, Liberia, Micronesia and the United States). 75 States abstained.

Accordingly, Secretary-General António Guterres convened the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. Its first session was held from November 18 to 22, 2019 in New York under the presidency of Ambassador Sima Bahous of Jordan.

23 States from the region attended the Conference. The five nuclear weapon States recognized by the NPT were invited as Observers. China, France, Russia and the United Kingdom accepted the invitation. Participants agreed to proceed by consensus on procedural and substantive issues pending the final agreement on rules of procedure, which will be considered during the intersessional period.

The thematic debate centered on principles and objectives, general obligations regarding nuclear weapons, general obligations re-garding other weapons of mass destruction, peaceful uses, inter-national cooperation, institutional arrangements and other aspects. Prior to the second session of the Conference, representatives from existing nuclear-weapon free zones will be invited to share good practices and lessons learned.

The Political Declaration adopted by the Conference stated the belief of the participating States that a verifiable Middle East Zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would greatly enhance regional and international peace and security and affirmed their intent to pursue in an open and inclusive manner the elaboration of a legally binding treaty on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region.

In that spirit, the Conference ex-tended an open-ended invitation to all those States to support the Declaration and join in the process. Participating States also undertook to follow-up on the Declaration and on the outcomes of the Conference. The next session will take place in New York from November 16 to 20, 2020.

Given the past history of efforts to achieve progress and taking into account the political situation and the tensions in the region the final outcome of the Conference can be considered reasonably successful. It can be assumed that the immediate objective is to establish a process that may lead to progress later on.

The absence of Israel and the United States at the Conference was already expected but did not prevent the Conference from proceeding as planned. It seems clear that Israel and the United States will not change their positions in the immediate future. It is important to note that the countries of the region showed unity of purpose and were able to avoid possible pitfalls.

However, divergent security percep-tions will have to be reconciled in the follow-up process. The decision-making method in future sessions of the Conference will continue to be one of the main questions under discussion, given the preference of some to consensus over other methods. Much effort will be needed in the intersessional period to define the next steps to be taken.

Persistence, diplomatic skill, cre-ativity and above all political will from the States of the region and other relevant players, particularly the nuclear weapon States, will be required to advance in the path toward ensuring the absence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in that region. The international community must lend its full support to that endeavor. [IDN-InDepthNews – 01 December 2019]

## Australia's 'Quit Nukes' Campaign Targets Superannuation Funds

By Neena Bhandari



Photo (L-R): Quit Nukes Director Margaret Peril, Australian Ethical Acting CEO Steve Gibbs, ICAN Australia Director Gem Romuld. Source: Quit Nukes.

SYDNEY (IDN) – A new campaign is encouraging Australians to urge their superannuation funds to exclude nuclear weapons producers from their investments, consistent with the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which has been ratified by 33 states and needs additional 17 ratifications to become enforceable under international law – 90 days after the fiftieth instrument of ratification.

A joint initiative of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) and International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), the Quit Nukes campaign is an Australian project that works in collaboration with Pax, the producers of the annual 'Don't Bank on the Bomb' report, which documents the global financing of nuclear weapons.

Quit Nukes Director Margaret Peril said: "The campaign is initially targeting the Australian superannuation industry, which currently invests over two trillion US dollars on behalf of its members, making it one of the largest pension fund assets worldwide." As many as 69 percent of Australians want their superannuation fund to not invest their money in companies that assist with nuclear weapons production and deployment, according to August 2019 poll by Ipsos,

a global market research company. But out of 190 or so superannuation funds, only two – Australian Ethical and Future Super – have been certified to be totally nuclear weapons free by Pax.

Future Super is committed to not investing in nuclear energy, uranium mining, nuclear weaponry or companies that profit from these industries. Its founder, Simon Sheikh, told IDN: "We take a long-term view on managing social and environmental risks, including the potential for catastrophic nuclear fallout. All Australians deserve a choice in how their money is invested and the future they are building for themselves and the next generations."

The campaign is encouraging nuclear-free finance by informing superannuation funds about the existing risks of nuclear weapons, the companies to avoid and the policies required to achieve portfolios that are free of companies associated with the production of nuclear weapons. Said Stuart Palmer, Head of Ethics Research at Australian Ethical, a company known for rejecting financing nuclear weapons: "We believe that the threat of nuclear war continues to pose an existential danger to life on this planet and the potential for misappropriation of nuclear technologies and materials

for weapons manufacture is one of the key reasons we will not invest in nuclear power either.”

Quit Nukes is advocating for the screening out of 18 companies across all portfolios: Aecom (USA), Aerojet Rocketdyne (USA), Airbus (The Netherlands) BAE Systems (United Kingdom) Bechtel (USA) Boeing (USA) BWX Technologies (USA) Fluor (USA) General Dynamics (USA) Honeywell International (USA) Huntington Ingalls Industries (USA) Jacobs Engineering (USA) Larsen & Toubro (India) Lockheed Martin (USA) Northrop Grumman (USA) Safran (France) Serco (United Kingdom) and Thales (France).

“The vast majority of people around the world want to see nuclear weapons eliminated and are realising that their bank accounts and super funds can be used to further this goal,” ICAN Australia Director, Gem Romuld told IDN. “While 100 billion US dollars is poured into the nuclear arms industry every year, shrinking the funds and social licence for nuclear bomb-making is a powerful way to apply the nuclear weapon ban treaty.”

Internationally, financial institutions are excluding nuclear arms producers in countries that have not yet joined the TPNW. The Treaty, once it enters into force, will make nuclear weapons illegal just as other treaties have made the use of chemical weapons, biological weapons, land mines and cluster munitions illegal.

“The Treaty also prohibits anyone from assisting with the production of nuclear weapons, which includes financing,” Romuld added.

“It has already provided the basis and motivation for a number of financial institutions to divest from nuclear arms producers, including the major Dutch pension fund ABP and the Norwegian sovereign wealth fund.”

Investing in nuclear weapons is also contrary to the United Nations-supported Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI).

For investors and advisers who are a signatory to the Principles for Responsible Investment, “there is an expectation for them to adhere to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDG 16 prescribes peaceful societies amongst other things. So, investing in nuclear weapons is clearly contrary to the spirit of SDG 16”, Peril told IDN.

It is worth noting that as many as 79 percent of Australians want their government to sign and ratify the TPNW, according to Ipsos data from November 2018. Australia does not possess any nuclear weapons, but it

subscribes to the doctrine of extended nuclear deterrence under the United States alliance, which is seen as key to Australia’s national security.

Dr Stephan Frühling, Associate Professor at the Australian National University’s Strategic and Defence Studies Centre in Canberra told IDN: “Australia values the stabilising role of US nuclear weapons in the Indo-Pacific security order. It should not sign the TPNW, which undermines a key pillar of international security by seeking to de-legitimise US extended deterrence and hence US alliances.”

He added: “US nuclear weapons have traditionally played a much less significant role in the US-Australia alliance than in other US alliances, and the question of what Australia can do politically as well as operationally to support US deterrence in Asia, including nuclear deterrence, will likely be a more important issue in the future than it has been in the past.”

So, does Australia place importance on US extended nuclear deterrence because it sees it as a stabilising factor in the Asian strategic order? David Santoro, Vice President and Director for Nuclear Policy at the Honolulu headquartered Pacific Forum told IDN:

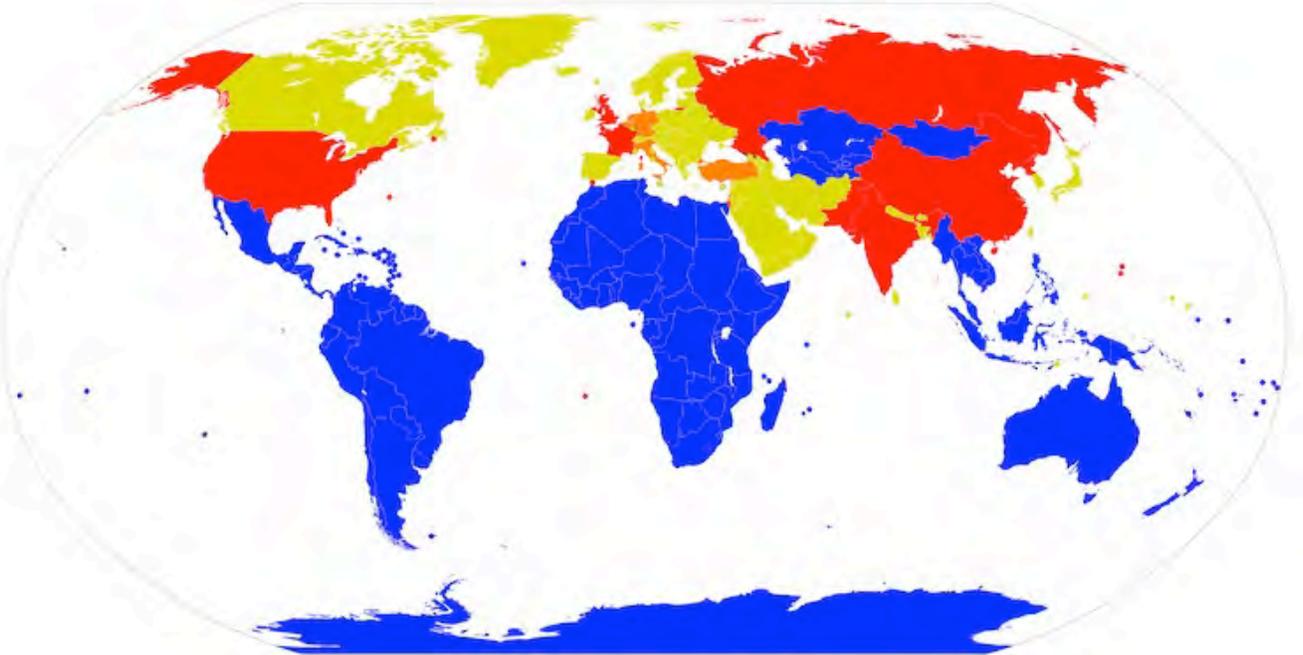
“Australia realises it needs to do more to enhance deterrence and defence in the region, which includes greater contributions to US extended nuclear deterrence. It does see such efforts as a stabilising factor in a rapidly changing Indo-Pacific characterised by China’s re-rise. Australia, however, also wants to better understand the risks associated with taking on a greater share of the deterrence and defence burden. More dialogue within ANZUS [Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty] about these questions, notably the nuclear dimension, is needed.”

In ‘Escalating cooperation: nuclear deterrence and the US-Australia alliance’, a paper published by the University of Sydney’s United States Studies Centre on November 15, 2019, the authors – Frühling, Santoro and Professor Andrew O’Neil – argue that Australia’s concerns over US extended nuclear deterrence “are primarily about entrapment, not abandonment”. [IDN-*InDepthNews* – 22 November 2019]

## Anxiety Looms Over the 10th NPT Review Conference Next Year

*Viewpoint by Sergio Duarte*

*The writer is President of Pugwash. Former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.*



*Image: Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (Blue); Nuclear weapons states (Red); Nuclear sharing (Orange); Neither, but NPT (Lime green). CC BY-SA 3.0*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The contentious start of the 74th Session of the First Committee of the General Assembly last October in New York was a harbinger of the difficulties to be faced in the run-up to the forthcoming 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and in United Nations multilateral organs devoted to disarmament.

Due to the controversy over the denial of visas to members of some delegations the Committee was only able to complete the general debate and to adopt its program of work two weeks into the session. Delegates of the States concerned engaged in a confrontational exchange of accusations that at one point forced the Committee to face the prospect of an indefinite suspension of its work.

A compromise procedural solution was finally worked out, allowing it to resume the consideration of the items on its agenda and ultimately proceed with the usual adoption of resolutions – some of them repetitive or conflicting.

The possibility of an unprecedented move of the venue of the 2021 session of the First Committee to alternative locations was raised but was averted by a wide margin. The large number of abstentions (72) shows that a majority of States preferred not to take sides in a dispute that reflected mainly the deterioration in the relations between the two major powers.

It must be recalled that earlier in the current year similar problems forced the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) to work informally instead of holding its regular scheduled session and was responsible for harsh exchanges and dissension at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2020 NPT Review Conference. The hostile climate prevailing between some key States may prove to be a major factor for the permanence and worsening of the dysfunctional situation in bilateral and multilateral bodies dealing with international security and disarmament questions.

The heated mutual accusations between the delegations involved highlighted questions quite extraneous to the subject matter of the First Committee. The ensuing debate on the substantive items in its agenda, however, showed that while the differences of approach between States that rely on nuclear weapons for security and the rest of the international community remain as acute as ever.

There is growing general concern about the future of the multilateral framework of agreements in the field of disarmament. Many members, including some of the allies of nuclear-weapon States voiced their preoccupation with the erosion of the arms control and non-proliferation architecture, particularly the demise of the Anti-ballistic Treaty (ABM) and the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), as well as with the prospect of a similar fate to befall the Joint Common Program of Action (JCPOA) and the New START Treaty. They urged the adoption of measures to restore confidence in the norms-based international process. Doubts about the effectiveness and validity of existing international law may result in a reinforcement of the trend to replace accepted principles and negotiated agreements by unilateral decisions of the powerful.

The First Committee heard urgent calls for the reaffirmation of the Reagan-Gorbachev mantra that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”. The need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-ban Treaty (CTBT) was emphasized by several speakers, who also commended the progress of the process of signature and ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Others voiced opposition to that treaty by reiterating the opinion that it contradicts and undermines the NPT, although without elaborating or convincingly explaining this position.

The importance of ensuring a consensus outcome of the Tenth Review Conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 2020 was brought up in the debate. The Review Conference is widely expected to promote a rededication to the goals of the NPT as a key multilateral instrument for international peace and security. A number of speakers pointed out that the NPT has not yet made good on its promises.

One of the latter said that “the overall objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons in the context of the NPT has eluded us for decades”, while another observed that “the NPT’s ultimate purpose—the total elimination of nuclear weapons—fades more into distance with every announcement of plans to stock-up and modernize nuclear arsenals and lower thresholds for the use of nuclear weapons.”

In fact, over the forty-nine years elapsed since the adoption of the NPT the uneven outcomes of the Treaty’s nine Review Conferences held so far indeed suggest a pervasive lack of confidence in the ability of the NPT to deliver on its promises. The longer this state of affairs prevails, the stronger will be the questioning

of the NPT as a pact that, in spite of its non-proliferation benefits, has come to be increasingly seen as a means for nuclear weapon possessors to seek the legitimization of their arsenals and justify their possession indefinitely. Measures to ensure that all its provisions – and not just those relating to some aspects – are fully implemented and effectively respected are urgently needed. The Review Conference is the proper forum for this task.

It should be remembered that the NPT was the result of close cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union during the times of the Cold War. In spite of their mistrust and outright hostility toward each other, their common interest in securing a treaty to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons to as few countries as possible prevailed. They were able to negotiate between themselves and introduce a joint draft of the NPT at the 18-nation Disarmament Committee. As co-Chairs of that body, they together steered the transit of the draft through the Committee and sent it to the United Nations General Assembly for endorsement. Their continuing leadership is a necessary element for the strength and permanence of the NPT.

It is to be regretted, in this connection, that the five nuclear-weapon States recognized by the Treaty have not been able to come up with common proposals capable of strengthening confidence in the NPT and facilitate the reinvigoration of the multilateral treatment of security matters that affect the whole community of nations. Disturbing suggestions for non-nuclear States to abandon the NPT have been made by a few scholars.

The NPT has proven to be resilient throughout its history. Its coming into being was certainly not the only reason why more States did not obtain atomic weapons, as presidential candidate John Kennedy feared in 1961. Nevertheless, it deserves special credit for being instrumental in limiting proliferation to a relatively small number of countries. The initial doubts and hesitations of many members of the international community – expressed in the fact that about one-fourth of the United Nations membership chose to vote against or abstain on Resolution 2373, which commended the Treaty to the signature of States in 1968 – were gradually overcome and the NPT became the most adhered-to instrument in the field of arms control.

It stood the test of its indefinite extension in 1995, although it could be argued in hindsight that it might have been wiser for non-nuclear States to have kept the leverage provided by the 25-year intervals prescribed in Article X.2.

There is considerable anxiety about how the current pessimistic atmosphere in the field of nuclear arms control and disarmament will impact the 2020 NPT Review Conference. Many parties fear the negative consequences of two failures in a row. Fortunately, the Third Preparatory Committee succeeded in agreeing on some of the necessary procedural decisions that will permit informal consultations on substance to be carried out in the run-up to the forthcoming review.

Consultations are underway between NAM (the Non-Aligned Movement) and interested governments to find a replacement for Ambassador Rafael Grossi, the President-designate of the 2020 NPT Conference, who was elected to become the new Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency after the passing of Mr. Yukya Amano. On substantive issues, the summary conclusions of the Chair of the Third PrepCom may prove useful as a basis for progress.

The recrudescence of the arms race and its spread into the outer space and cyber domains, as well as the prospect of development of new and more threatening warfare technologies is an underlying concern for many of the parties of the Treaty. It is not difficult to imagine suddenly disabled defensive systems rendered powerless against new delivery vehicles launched from undetectable locations and carrying nuclear warheads travelling at speeds several times greater than that of sound to hit their targets in a few seconds.

In such a scenario, the deterrence value of current nuclear response doctrines would all but disappear. Ironically, the development of such technologies seems able to provide in the near future a solution of sorts to that problem: the use of artificial intelligence would ensure that even in the aftermath of the utter devastation and absence of human hands in the attacked country to press the fatal button, retaliatory nuclear forces would be automatically released to obliterate the adversary and conceivably the rest of the world.

Given the vast destructive power of modern nuclear weapons, “mutual assured destruction” would be replaced by “general assured destruction”, meaning that human civilization as we know it could be wiped out from the face of Earth. Human folly would then accomplish in a matter of a few minutes what unchecked climate change – also a product of human folly – would have taken a few decades to achieve.

It is not too late to try to reverse this ominous trend. Enlightened leadership, particularly from the most armed countries is urgently needed. The United States and Russia must resume the dialogue and constructive

cooperation that resulted in the considerable reduction of their nuclear arsenals, even during the Cold War. Further reductions should be negotiated and agreed, leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons altogether. Other nuclear-weapon States should not remain aloof but must also live up to their responsibilities for the improvement of world security conditions. The international community as a whole must remain actively engaged in promoting the observance of disarmament commitments entered into and in seeking solutions to bring to an end the current impasse in the deliberative and negotiating disarmament multilateral bodies. Encouragement and support from civil society and public opinion is vital in this regard.

A constructive initiative in the direction of nuclear disarmament came into being in 2017, when 122 States negotiated and adopted the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. (TPNW). Rather than engaging in a fruitless debate on alleged incompatibilities between it and the NPT the international community must work together on enhancing the complementary aspects of both instruments in order to make possible the achievement of the high aspiration of a world free from the threat of all weapons of mass destruction.

The importance of a solemn declaration by the NPT Review Conference that a nuclear war cannot be won and should never be fought was emphasized at the 2019 Session of the First Committee of the General Assembly. The recommitment by all States parties to the objectives of non-proliferation, peaceful uses and disarmament contained in the NPT would be a welcome departure point for more specific agreements.

For instance, the United States and Russia could agree on the extension of the New START Treaty for five years beyond its expiration date in order to allow for new negotiations on further reductions of their nuclear arsenals. All five nuclear weapon States Parties to the NPT could also: a) pledge to freeze technological developments in nuclear weapons and other methods of warfare; b) agree to negotiate and adopt new confidence-building measures aimed at reducing the risk of a nuclear conflict by design or accident; and ensure the revitalization of the UN disarmament machinery, in particular the Conference on Disarmament by starting substantive negotiations on existing proposals. The NPT Review Conference could address the significance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-ban Treaty (CTBT) to the realization of the objectives of the NPT. [IDN-InDepthNews – 21 November 2019]

## Growing Anxiety About the Crucial 2020 NPT Review Conference

*By Santo D. Banerjee*



*Photo: Sculpture depicting St. George slaying the dragon. The dragon is created from fragments of Soviet SS-20 and United States Pershing nuclear missiles. UN Photo/Milton Grant.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The survivors of atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the Mayors of the two Japanese cities whose inhabitants have experienced first-hand the mind boggling cruelty of nuclear weapons, representatives of other civil society organizations as well as the United Nations are increasingly concerned about the fate of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

'Nihon Hidankyo' representing the atomic bomb survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki handed over the "Appeal of the Hibakusha", calling for the elimination of nuclear weapons, to Sacha Llorenti, the First Committee President of the ongoing 74th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), and Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, UNODA on October 11.

Assistant Secretary General, Toshiki Fujimori, of Nihon Hidankyo, 'Japan Confederation of A-and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations', submitted the appeal, a symbolic representation containing more than 10.5 million signatures.

The First Committee President Mr Llorenti, who is Bolivia's Permanent Representative to the UN, expressed his gratitude for the effort Mr. Fujimori and Nihon Hidankyo had undertaken towards the gathering of support for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

Troubled by the outcome of the third session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom), the Mayor of Hiroshima Kazumi Matsui and his Nagasaki counterpart Tomihisa Taue, president and vice president of the Mayors for Peace, issued on May 10, 2019 a Joint Appeal calling for finding a "common ground on the NPT" – Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons – because the global interest embodied in the Treaty is in the national interests of all countries and all peoples worldwide.

"We view the NPT as one of the most important treaties of the post-World War II era. With a membership just short of the United Nations Charter, this treaty embodies a near-global consensus on the basic proposition that international peace and security would be strengthened in a world free from the existence or proliferation of nuclear weapons," said the appeal.

The objective of the landmark international treaty NPT is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

NPT represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. Opened for signature in 1968, the Treaty entered into force in 1970. On May 11, 1995, the Treaty was extended indefinitely. A total of 191 States have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States; USA, Russia, China, Britain and France. More countries have ratified the NPT than any other arms limitation and disarmament agreement, a testament to the Treaty's significance.

Ahead of the 2020 Review Conference April-May at the UN headquarters in New York, the PrepCom has met three times: in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The third session was specifically mandated to make every effort to produce a consensus report containing recommendations to the Review Conference, taking into account the deliberations and results of its previous sessions.

"We have a lot of work to do, especially since next year is the 50th anniversary of the NPT," Malaysian Ambassador Syed Mohamad Hasrin Aidid, who chaired the preparatory committee sessions, told the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the sidelines of the PrepCom.

Dr Rebecca Johnson, founder of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy and author of 'Unfinished Business', told IDN, "we need to bring into force the new UN Treaty that prohibits nuclear weapons use, production and deployment for everyone, and strengthen all aspects of the international security regimes that we need to protect humanity from nuclear and climate catastrophes that are looming over us."

Expectations for the outcome of this year's NPT Preparatory Committee were low at best. Not surprisingly, given the nuclear powers' reliance on their genocidal and omnicidal arsenals and pressures building for nuclear weapons proliferation, these expectations were not exceeded, said Dr. Joseph Gerson, President of the Campaign for Peace Disarmament and Common Security, Director of the American Friends Service Committee's Peace & Economic Security Program, and Vice-President of the International Peace Bureau.

He added: "With the U.S. and Russian withdrawals from the INF Treaty, the future of the New START Treaty in doubt, and each of the nuclear weapons states committed to spending massive fortunes to upgrade their nuclear arsenals and delivery systems, humanity is on the verge of an extremely dangerous unrestrained nuclear arms race."

Also the UN is genuinely apprehensive about the 2020 NPT Review Conference. In opening remarks at James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS) and Mission of Malaysia NPT Diplomatic Workshop on October 18, UNODA chief Ms. Nakamitsu said: "We are faced with a dual dilemma when it comes to the NPT. Not only is time running short ... but there is also little evidence that positions are converging. The goings on in the First Committee are testament to the fact that, indeed, quite the opposite is occurring."

The First Committee deals with disarmament, global challenges and threats to peace that affect the international community and seeks out solutions to the challenges in the international security regime.

Common ground is in short supply at precisely the time when we need it most, she added. "A

combination of deteriorating relationships between nuclear weapon states (NWS), dangerous rhetoric about the utility of nuclear weapons, modernization campaigns that are, in effect, a qualitative arms race and regional conflicts with nuclear dimensions have created a dangerous context in which the possible use of a nuclear weapons is all together greater than it has been since the darkest days of the cold war."

Now is, therefore, an opportune time to remind States parties that the NPT is common ground. From the core supporters of the TPNW to NWS and their allies alike, the NPT is recognized as an intrinsic element of our collective security and an instrument from which all States parties continue to derive significant value.

In the face of a troubling international environment, ensuring that the security and other benefits provided by the Treaty remain intact should be every States parties' number one priority, particularly as the 2020 Review Conference – the fiftieth anniversary of the NPT's entry into force – "presents both a symbolic and practical opportunity for States parties".

She appealed to all States to avail of the opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to the NPT and a world free of nuclear weapons; to demonstrate the implementation of all obligations undertaken to attain this goal; to strengthen non-proliferation measures against evolving challenges; and, also to return the world to a path that reduces nuclear dangers through practical steps in disarmament.

The UN's concern about the 2020 NPT Review Conference derives from the fact that the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, ended without the adoption of a consensus substantive outcome.

After a successful 2010 Review Conference at which States parties agreed to a final document which included conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions, including the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, the 2015 outcome constitutes a setback for the strengthened review process.

The setback lies in the fact that the 2015 outcome does not ensure accountability with respect to activities under the three pillars of the Treaty – non-proliferation, disarmament, and the right to peacefully use nuclear technology – as part of the package in support of the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

Amid uncertainties looming over the forthcoming NPT appraisal and the debate over whether that Treaty and the TPNW are compatible or conflicting, the Nobel Peace laureate International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is sanguine about its coming into force.

The TPNW was adopted by the UNGA on July 7, 2017 and opened for signature on September 20, 2017. It will enter into force 90 days after the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession has been deposited.

According to ICAN, before the end of September 2019 on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 12 states took a significant step by signing or ratifying the UN Treaty, during a special High-Level Ceremony at the UN Headquarters in New York. Subsequently, the Treaty now has 79 signatories and 32 States Parties.

ICAN says, the Treaty is almost two-thirds of the way to its entry into force, and this momentum is expected to continue. “Several countries have confirmed to ICAN that their ratifications are imminent, and campaigners around the world will not

In the face of a troubling international environment, ensuring that the security and other benefits provided by the Treaty remain intact should be every States parties’ number one priority, particularly as the 2020 Review Conference – the 50th anniversary of the NPT’s entry into force – “presents both a symbolic and practical opportunity for States parties”.

She appealed to all States to avail of the opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to the NPT and a world free of nuclear weapons; to demonstrate the implementation of all obligations undertaken to attain this goal; to strengthen non-proliferation measures against evolving challenges; and, also to return the world to a path that reduces nuclear dangers through practical steps in disarmament.

The UN’s concern about the 2020 NPT Review Conference derives from the fact that the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, ended without the adoption of a consensus substantive outcome.

After a successful 2010 Review Conference at which States parties agreed to a final document which included conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions, including the implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, the 2015 outcome constitutes a setback for the strengthened review process.

The setback lies in the fact that the 2015 outcome does not ensure accountability with respect to activities under the three pillars of the Treaty – non-proliferation, disarmament, and the right to peacefully use nuclear technology – as part of the package in support of the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995.

Amid uncertainties looming over the forthcoming NPT appraisal and the debate over whether that Treaty and the TPNW are compatible or conflicting, the Nobel Peace laureate International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) is sanguine about its coming into force.

The TPNW was adopted by the UNGA on July 7, 2017 and opened for signature on September 20, 2017. It will enter into force 90 days after the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession has been deposited.

According to ICAN, before the end of September 2019 on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, 12 states took a significant step by signing or ratifying the UN Treaty, during a special High-Level Ceremony at the UN Headquarters in New York. Subsequently, the Treaty now has 79 signatories and 32 States Parties.

ICAN says, the Treaty is almost two-thirds of the way to its entry into force, and this momentum is expected to continue. “Several countries have confirmed to ICAN that their ratifications are imminent, and campaigners around the world will not stop until every country is on board. [IDN-InDepthNews, 27 October 2019

## Nuclear Abolition Exhibition Boosts Japan-Kazakh Relations

*By Katsuhiko Asagiri*



*Ribbon-cutting ceremony opens 'Everything You Treasure...' exhibition (from left to right): Sapar Akhmetov, member of the Mazhilis (lower house) of the Parliament of Kazakhstan, Amerkhan Rakhimzhanov, Director of the Library of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Elbassy, Kuanysh Sultanov, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Kazakhstan under the First President of Kazakhstan, Tatsuhiko Kasai, Ambassador of Japan to Kazakhstan, Bizhanova Gulnara Kadyrzhanqyzy, member of the Mazhilis of Parliament of Kazakhstan, Hirotsugu Terasaki, Director General of Peace and Global Issues of the SGI. Photo credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri | IDN-INPS*

NUR-SULTAN, Kazakhstan (IDN) – 2019 marks the 30th anniversary of the end of nuclear weapons testing in Semipalatinsk, the primary testing venue for the Soviet Union's nuclear weapons, the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, and the ratification by Kazakhstan as the 26th country to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Kazakhstan is known for its commitment to ridding the world of nuclear weapons. An estimated 1.5 million of its people suffered the effects of the testing of 456 nuclear weapons at Semipalatinsk over four decades.

This year also marks the first showing of the Russian-language version of the exhibition 'Everything You Treasure – For a World Free from Nuclear Weapons', from October 2-13 in Nur-Sultan city, the capital of Kazakhstan. The exposition was first shown in 2012 in Hiroshima, the sight of first ever nuclear bombings along with Nagasaki. It has since been seen in 90 cities in 20 countries. Kazakhstan is the 21st country to host it.

Co-sponsored by the Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the Nobel laureate International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and the Library of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Elbassy, the exhibition encourages viewers to understand how nuclear weapons threaten all that we treasure in life in all its dimensions: environmental, medical, economic, human rights, energy, spiritual, gender, generational and security aspects.



< Hirotsugu Terasaki, Director General of Peace and Global Issues of the SGI, delivering opening remarks. Photo credit: Katsuhiko Asagiri / IDN-INPS. >

The exhibition was inaugurated on October 1 with opening remarks by Amerkhan Rakhimzhanov, Director of the Library of the First President of the Republic of Kazakhstan – Elbassy; Hirotsugu Terasaki, Director General of Peace and Global Issues of the SGI; Tatsuhiko Kasai, Ambassador of Japan to Kazakhstan; and Kuanysh Sultanov, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Kazakhstan under the First President of Kazakhstan.

Amerkhan Rakhimzhanov, who studied in Japan, said, he was “overcome by deep emotion that we are hosting the international traveling exhibition Everything You Treasure—For a World Free From Nuclear Weapons’ at the initiative of our part partner, Soka Gakkai International”.

“This will be the largest exhibition I have organized since I became the director of Elibassy. The Library of the first president of the Republic of Kazakhstan treasures the partner relationship with like-minded people here and abroad. This year, we have developed a friendly relationship with SGI. I expect to further our partnership into the future,” added Mr. Rakhimzhanov.

Mr. Terasaki, who led the SGI delegation to the ‘Congress of the Leaders of World and Traditional Religions’ on October 10-11, 2018 in the Kazakh capital city, then named Astana, read out a message by SGI President Dr. Daisaku Ikeda. “Together with expressing our profound respect for Kazakhstan’s continuing efforts to promote the cause of denuclearization in the face of numerous daunting challenges, I wish to share our sense of joy at being able to hold the exhibition . . . here in this beautiful land of peace.”

Dr. Ikeda went on to recall in the message that “a new solidarity of hope seeking a world free from nuclear weapons originated and spread from Kazakhstan”. This is the brilliant history of creating peace that is engraved in the awareness of the world’s peoples, he added.

He quoted President Nursultan Nazarbayev, the First President of Kazakhstan, who succeeded in realizing the world’s first closing of a nuclear weapons testing site: “Nuclear weapons and radiation was far from being a distant theory for the people of Kazakhstan. It was a terrible and inexorable evil that had been devastating our land for more than four decades.”

The exhibition is an “integral part” of the movement, which brought together people living in distant places and across differences of nationality and stance, powerfully communicated the message that there is no place on Earth that can remain immune to the inhumanity and dire threat of nuclear weapons, said Dr. Ikeda.

Reading out Dr. Ikeda’s message, Mr. Terasaki stated: “What we must challenge and confront above all are the ways of thinking that justify nuclear weapons”. Recalling the stirring words of great Kazakh national poet, Abai Kunanbaev, “Do not lose your sense of justice and never tire of doing good,” Dr. Ikeda said, “The members of the SGI are deeply committed to continuing to exert our fullest efforts, alongside our respected friends in Kazakhstan, toward the goal of a global society of peace and creative coexistence, a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons”.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Japanese Ambassador to Kazakhstan Tatsuhiko Kasai expressed praise for organization of the exhibition ‘Everything You Treasure – For a World Free from Nuclear Weapons’, and mentioned the experiences of his grandmother who was affected by an atom bombing of Nagasaki.



< First showing of exhibition created by SGI and ICAN in Central Asia. Photo credit: The Seikyo Shimbun. >

Kuanish Sultanov, Chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Kazakhstan under the First President of Kazakhstan and former deputy prime minister, while referring to the history of anti-nuclear grassroots movement in Kazakhstan, declared that “people’s solidarity is stronger than nuclear weapons” and expressed his conviction that human wisdom will find a way to overcome the menace of nuclear weapons.

On October 2, the SGI delegation, headed by Mr. Terasaki, called on Kazakh Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tleuberdi, who welcomed the second visit by SGI delegation following its first for the World Congress of Leaders of Traditional Religions in October 2018. Referring to the exhibition, Mr. Tleuberdi said that Kazakhstan has attached great importance to partnership with Japan when it comes to efforts for nuclear disarmament.



< SGI delegation 3km from the ground zero at Semipalatinsk former Nuclear test site. Photo: Katsuhiko Asagiri >

On October 3, the SGI delegation flew to Semey, until 2007 known as Semipalatinsk, and moved to Kurchatov, once the centre of operations for the adjoining Semipalatinsk nuclear test site, and visited a former nuclear test site called polygon where the first nuclear weapon was tested in 1949. It was followed by visit to the Museum at the National Nuclear Center at Kurchatov. The next day, the SGI delegation visited the Anatomical Museum in Semey, which illustrates the devastating effects on health as a result of radioactive fallout from the nearby Polygon (the infamous Semipalatinsk nuclear test site) had on the region and its population.

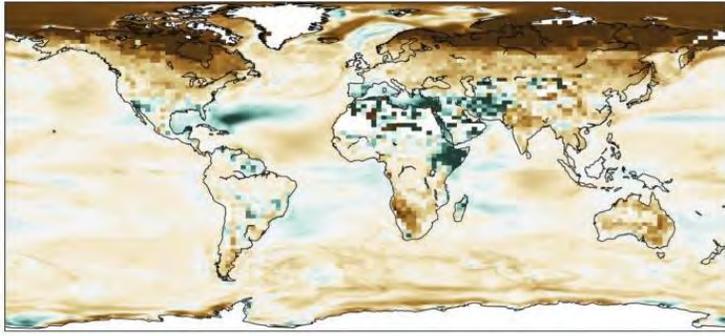
Since the Soviet Union took away all medical records before the First President of Kazakhstan Nazabayev closed the nuclear weapon test site in 1991, they cannot establish direct linkage between nuclear tests and incidence of birth defects and cancers but these incidence is much higher than for the rest of the country.

The SGI delegation also visited Nuclear Medicine Cancer Center and the “Stronger than death” monument on Polkovnichy Island in Semey City. The monument depicts a mother sheltering her child from a nuclear explosion, which is depicted as an atom, inside a mushroom cloud shape. Earlier in Almaty, the capital city of Kazakhstan until 1997, the SGI delegation headed by Mr Terasaki met with Olzhas Suleimenov, a Kazakh poet and the founder of an international anti-nuclear movement 'Nevada-Semipalatinsk'. The protest movement which Mr. Suleimenov led since 1989 is known as the first anti-nuclear movement in all countries of the former Soviet Union and has played a major role in closing the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in 1991. He expressed his interest in cooperating with SGI for the common goal of achieving a world free from nuclear weapons.

Mr. Terasaki spoke about second Soka Gakkai president Josei Toda’s declaration calling for the abolition of nuclear weapons in 1957 and said that the core of the nuclear weapons problem lies in a way of thinking that justify nuclear weapons: the readiness to annihilate others when they are seen as a threat. Mr. Suleimenov responded that nuclear weapons are an “absolute evil” and should therefore be completely eliminated. [IDN-InDepthNews – 17 October 2019]

## New Study Warns of Devastating Global Consequences of an India-Pakistan Nuclear War

By Daniel Strain \*



–100 –75 –50 –25 0 25 50 75 100  
*A map showing the changes in the productivity of ecosystems around the world in the second year after a nuclear war between India and Pakistan. Regions in brown would experience steep declines in plant growth, while regions in green could see increases. (Credit: Nicole Lovenduski and Lili Xia). Source: University of Colorado Boulder.*

BOULDER, Colorado, USA (IDN) – A nuclear war between India and Pakistan could, over the span of less than a week, kill 50-125 million people—more than the death toll during all six years of World War II, according to new research.

*< A map showing the changes in the productivity of ecosystems around the world in the second year after a nuclear war between India and Pakistan. Regions in brown would experience steep declines in plant growth,*

A new study conducted by researchers from CU Boulder and Rutgers University examines how such a hypothetical future conflict would have consequences that could ripple across the globe. Today, India and Pakistan each have about 150 nuclear warheads at their disposal, and that number is expected to climb to more than 200 by 2025.

The picture is grim. That level of warfare wouldn't just kill millions of people locally, said CU Boulder's Brian Toon, who led the research published October 2 in the journal *Science Advances*. It might also plunge the entire planet into a severe cold spell, possibly with temperatures not seen since the last Ice Age.

His team's findings come as tensions are again simmering between India and Pakistan. In August, India made a change to its constitution that stripped rights from people living in the long-contested region of Kashmir. Soon after, the nation sent troops to Kashmir, moves that Pakistan criticized sharply. "An India-Pakistan war could double the normal death rate in the world," said Toon, a professor in the Laboratory of Atmospheric and Space Physics (LASP). "This is a war that would have no precedent in human experience."

It's a subject that Toon, also of the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, has had on his mind for decades. He came of age during the height of the Cold War when schoolchildren still practiced ducking-and-covering under their desks. As a young atmospheric scientist in the early 1980s, he was part of a group of researchers who first coined the term "nuclear winter"—a period of extreme cold that would likely follow a large-scale nuclear barrage between the U.S. and Russia.

And despite the collapse of the Soviet Union, Toon believes that such weapons are still very much a threat—one that's underscored by current hostilities between India and Pakistan. "They're rapidly building up their arsenals," Toon said. "They have huge populations, so lots of people are threatened by these arsenals, and then there's the unresolved conflict over Kashmir."

In his latest study, he and his colleagues wanted to find out just how bad such a conflict could get. To do that, the team drew on a wide range of evidence, from computer simulations of Earth's atmosphere to accounts of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan in 1945. Based on their analysis, the devastation would come in several stages. In the first week of the conflict, the group reports that India and Pakistan combined could successfully detonate about 250 nuclear warheads over each other's cities.

There's no way to know how powerful these weapons would be—neither nation has conducted nuclear tests in decades—but the researchers estimated that each one could kill as many as 700,000 people. Most of those people wouldn't die from the blasts themselves, however, but from the out-of-control fires that would follow. "If you look at Hiroshima after the bomb fell, you can see a huge field of rubble about a mile wide," Toon said. "It wasn't the result of the bomb. It was the result of the fire." For the rest of the globe, the fires would just be the beginning.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The researchers calculated that an India-Pakistan war could inject as much as 80 billion pounds of thick, black smoke into Earth's atmosphere. That smoke would block sunlight from reaching the ground, driving temperatures around the world down by an average of between 3.5-9 degrees Fahrenheit for several years. Worldwide food shortages would likely come soon after.

“Our experiment, conducted with a state-of-the-art Earth system model, reveals large-scale reductions in the productivity of plants on land and of algae in the ocean, with dangerous consequences for organisms higher on the food chain, including humans,” said study coauthor Nicole Lovenduski, an associate professor of atmospheric and oceanic sciences and a fellow of the Institute of Arctic and Alpine Research (INSTAAR).

Toon recognizes that the scope of such a war may be hard for people to wrap their heads around. But he hopes that the study will show people around the world that the end of the Cold War didn't eliminate the risk of global nuclear war. “Hopefully, Pakistan and India will take note of this paper,” he said. “But mostly, I'm concerned that Americans aren't informed about the consequences of nuclear war.”

\* Daniel Strain is a science writer who writes about space science, physics, engineering, geology, anthropology, education, and outreach and engagement. [IDN-InDepthNews – 5 October 2019]



Map showing Line of Control (LOC) and Working boundary in Kashmir

## UN Chief Warns of Nuclear Disarmament Going Reverse

*By Shanta Roy*



*Photo: Secretary-General António Guterres (fourth from left) and Tijjani Muhammad-Bande (left), President of the seventy-fourth Session of the General Assembly, attend the High-Level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate and promote the International Day For The Total Elimination Of Nuclear Weapons. Credit: UN Photo/Rick Bajornas.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – As the United Nations commemorated its annual International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons September 26, Secretary-General António Guterres underlined two political realities facing the world community.

Firstly, not only has progress on nuclear disarmament come to a halt, but “it is going in reverse,” he warned. Secondly, relations between nuclear-armed States are mired in mistrust while dangerous rhetoric about the utility of nuclear weapons is on the rise, he noted.

“A qualitative nuclear arms race is underway,” cautioned Guterres, and “the painstakingly constructed arms control regime is fraying,” he declared, addressing a high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament during the opening of the 74th session of the UN General Assembly.

But anti-nuclear activists and civil society organizations (CSOs) expressed their concerns—and were alarmed – at recent developments, including the halting progress on nuclear disarmament and rising right-wing rhetoric and war mongering among nuclear powers such as the U.S. and UK, and India and Pakistan.

As world leaders warned about the dangers of a nuclear war during the one-day meeting, Joseph Gerson, President, Campaign for Peace, Disarmament and Common Security, told IDN the sad, ugly and

dangerous truth is that while diplomats talk at the UN, all of the nuclear weapons states are upgrading their nuclear arsenals and delivery systems in their preparations to inflict nuclear apocalypse.

“And with their actions, they undermine the foundations of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and encourage proliferation,” he said. “There is a reason that the atomic scientists have warned that human survival stands at two minutes to midnight.”

He said many have observed the parallels between the current era and the years of sleep-walking into World War I. “This time, however, the world’s great powers are armed with genocidal and potentially omnicidal nuclear and cyber weaponry,” noted Gerson, who is Disarmament Coordinator at the American Friends Service Committee and Vice-President, International Peace Bureau.

Dr M. V. Ramana, Professor and Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security at the School of Public Policy and Global Affairs (SPPGA) at the University of British Columbia, told IDN:

“I think it is useful and important for the Secretary-General to be hosting this event and making this appeal”. To understand its significance, he pointed out, one has to start with the understanding that he is just reproducing the sentiments and ideas expressed by many, many people around the world and lots of countries.

“It is their combined voice that is coming through the Secretary-General’s call, and it is their actions and the pressure they manage to bring to bear that will eventually lead to the elimination of nuclear weapons,” he added. “I also think it worth noting that the Secretary-General states clearly, almost in an offhand way, that ‘the only real way to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons is to eliminate nuclear weapons’”.

This is a very important observation, for it makes it clear that the current status quo, or any arrangement where some countries have nuclear weapons and others don’t, will not be sustainable, declared Dr Ramana.

Dr Rebecca Johnson, nuclear analyst, who serves on the International Panel on Fissile Materials (IPFM) and International Steering Group (ISG) of the 2017 Nobel Peace laureate International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), told IDN: “I welcome UN Secretary-General Guterres’s brief statement on nuclear weapons elimination, but it was astonishing to hear him pay tribute to “leadership of the nuclear weapon states” that possess the largest arsenals.

Yes, the U.S. and Russia reduced the huge arsenals they had amassed in the Cold War, she said, but they need to be held accountable for undermining existing disarmament treaties and constantly upgrading their military forces and nuclear arsenals. “In the past couple of years, the only leadership we’ve seen is Trump and Putin trashing arms control and boycotting the UN mandated multilateral negotiations that led to the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty,” said Dr Johnson.

“As children come out on the streets to beg for leadership to tackle the climate emergency,” she argued, “our world faces a resurgence of nuclear threats because of the policies of the nine nuclear armed governments and their allies and colluders.” These linked existential threats require collectively-effective humanitarian-led security action from everyone.

Nuclear-armed leaders are far too reliant on their weapons technologies and military threats. They are stuck with 20th century defence thinking when the world needs 21st century leadership to pursue climate action and humanitarian disarmament.

“How about paying tribute to the governments that added their signatures and ratifications to the Nuclear Prohibition Treaty this week,?” she asked. [12 States joined the Nuclear Ban Treaty on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.]

Elaborating further, Gerson told IDN: “We need actions, not words designed to deflect responsibility. Sweet and deflecting rhetoric at the UN reinforces the reckless and extraordinarily dangerous practice of nuclear bluff and blackmail, most immediately in the Pakistani-Indian confrontation over Kashmir, in the Trump Administration’s smashing of the world’s nuclear arms control architecture, and the growing U.S.-Russian-Chinese great power tensions”.

He said three actions can help to stanch the growing nuclear dangers: international action to facilitate resolution of the decades-old Kashmir crisis; one or more of the nuclear umbrella states signing and ratifying the Treaty for Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which would fundamentally disrupt the nuclear disorder, and – as in the 1980s – regeneration of massive popular demands for nuclear disarmament, this time in partnership with climate and justice movements.

“We can hope that the TPNW will come into force, but it will not seriously impact the nuclear nine unless its states parties find the courage to confront, isolate and sanction the nuclear powers. Power yields nothing without resistance,” declared Gerson.

Speaking at the high-level meeting, the newly-elected President of the UN General Assembly Tijjani Muhammad-Bande told delegates: “As we approach the Seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, we recall that our organisation was born of a time of devastation and distrust.”

“The tragedy of the first-ever use of nuclear weapons makes it crucial that we do everything to ensure that it was also the last time such weapons are deployed. ‘Never again’, must remain our main refrain,” he added. [IDN-InDepthNews – 29 September 2019]

## Concerns About Military Build-up in Iceland

By Lowana Veal



*Photo: Protest in Reykjavik organised by peace, LGBTQ and women's groups during U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence on September 4, 2019. Credit: Lowana Veal | IDN-INPS.*

REYKJAVIK (IDN) – It was widely believed that the U.S. military left Iceland in 2006 when they abandoned the base adjoining Iceland's international airport at Keflavik on the southwest tip of the island.

But recent developments, in particular the visit of U.S. Vice-President Mike Pence to Iceland in early September and perhaps a previous visit of U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in February 2019, reveal other motives.

Pompeo discussed security issues while in Iceland, and on Iceland's national day, June 17, issued a statement that "Iceland is also a steadfast NATO ally" and "We thank Iceland for its assistance with the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan and the Coalition to Defeat ISIS."

Prior to Pence's visit, a B2 stealth bomber capable of carrying nuclear weapons had come to Iceland. A press release issued by the 'United States Air Forces in Europe – Air Forces Africa' on August 2019 stated: "The use of strategic bombers in Iceland helps exercise Naval Air Station Keflavik as a forward location for the B-2, ensuring that it is engaged, postured and ready with credible force to assure, deter and defend the U.S. and its allies in an increasingly complex security environment."

The bomber was ostensibly in Iceland to practise "hot-pit refuelling", a term used for the practice of refuelling planes without shutting off the engines.

Thorgerdur Katrin Gunnarsdottir, leader of the Reform Party and member of the parliamentary Althingi's Foreign Affairs Committee, said that the committee had not received confirmation that the bomber was not carrying nuclear weapons, but that it was important to find out why the bomber was in Iceland as well as whether it was carrying nuclear missiles.

Iceland's National Security Policy, formulated in 2016, states that it will "ensure that Iceland and its territorial waters are declared free from nuclear weapons, subject to Iceland's international commitments, with the aim of promoting disarmament and peace on Iceland's part".

During a meeting with Iceland's Foreign Minister Gudlaugur Thor Thordarson, Pence said that the United States is very determined to strengthen Iceland's defence and ensure safety, and that the security area at Keflavik is an important component in this respect.

While in Iceland, Pence was asked by the Icelandic press whether he thought it had been a good idea to close down the base in 2006. He was evasive in his response, apparently saying that he would talk to staff at the base and report on the situation to U.S. President Donald Trump.

After the U.S. military left Iceland, most of the site was redeveloped for high-tech industry. But part of the site – the security zone – remained closed to the public. This remains under the auspices of the Icelandic Coastguard, but a Washington Post reporter travelling with Pence’s contingent described it as “slate grey and windowless. Highly secure. Lots of military and NATO work done here, per WH [White House].” Pence took a “brief tour inside the command centre, which was full of screens tracking air and sea movements around Iceland and in the Arctic. It’s part of Naval Air Station Keflavik”. But then the press was escorted out, “so VPOTUS [the US vice-president] could get a classified briefing.”

Although it does not have its own military, Iceland is part of NATO and signed the Defense of Iceland Agreement in 1951 that is still valid. Trump recently complained that Iceland was not contributing enough to NATO funds.

Nevertheless, Iceland has promised to contribute 300 billion kroner (about 3.37 billion dollars) to upgrade the facilities in the security zone of the former base so that it can house up to 1,000 troops at a time in basic accommodation and upgrade two hangars so that they can house two fighter jet squadrons, or 18-24 fighter jets, at a time. The build-up was first mooted and agreed in 2016 when a different government was in power in Iceland, but details have only recently emerged.

Now, the second largest party is the Left-Greens, which is anti-military and against NATO. In a document produced in 2018, the U.S. embassy in Reykjavik said that “(the) abrupt 2006 closure of Naval Air Station Keflavik changed the U.S.-Iceland relationship fundamentally; the U.S. remained treaty-bound to provide for Iceland’s defence, but the physical manifestation of that commitment has disappeared.”

The embassy noted that the political situation in Iceland since the financial crisis “strengthened pacifist political tendencies” and that “[while] the current government ... is generally supportive of close ties with the United States, the Left Green Movement (LGM) leadership is less forward-leaning toward U.S. and NATO positions on security matters. We have to walk a fine line to maintain commitments in this area by being especially

cognisant of the sensitivity of the issue within the government coalition.”

Indeed, the Left-Greens, the only party in the Althingi [Icelandic parliament] with an anti-NATO policy, have been bombarded with criticism for allowing funds to go towards the revamping of part of the old base. But it seems that they are fighting back, as PM Katrin Jakobsdottir told Pence, and that if future developments to the former base were going to happen, they needed first to be discussed democratically and transparently in the Althingi. Her party intends to put forward a proposal to this effect in the coming months.

Located in the security zone, the Icelandic Coast Guard includes maritime safety, security surveillance and law enforcement in the seas surrounding Iceland in its mandate. Although security and defence issues were discussed in the zone, Pence had also had meetings in Hofdi, the building where Reagan and Gorbachev met in 1986 and at which the initial steps were taken towards the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) which has recently ended.

At Hofdi, Pence met Reykjavik mayor Dagur B. Eggertsson, who said he was “grieved” that the INF Treaty had ended. Given its history, the mayor offered the building as a future venue to discuss disarmament ... because I’m sure it’s not if but when people sit together again to work on the issue of nuclear weapons in the world, I think that Hofdi would be an excellent place for that.” Pence was not averse to the idea but said that the United States considered that China and even India should take part in the discussions if a new agreement was to be made.

While talking to Thordarson, Pence had expressed concerns about increased military activities by the Russians in the Arctic, and said he was eager to discuss security and commerce issues with Jakobsdottir, who met Pence immediately after arriving from Sweden, where she had attended a convention organised by the Council of Nordic Trade Unions.

Pence later tweeted: “Great visiting the NATO Control and Reporting Center today in Iceland! Thank you to the Icelandic Coast Guard Commander for a great briefing on NATO operations based out of Keflavik Air Base.” Jakobsdottir had different priorities. Besides pointing out that Iceland had a policy against military build-up in Nordic climes, she said that climate change, gender equality and the rights of LGBTQ+ people were key issues for her government to tackle. And she was much more worried about climate change than Russia’s activities in the Arctic. [IDN-InDepthNews – 14 September 2019]

## Special UN Meeting Calls for Entry into Force of Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

*By J Nastranis*



*Photo: CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo addressing UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on 9 September 2019 to commemorate and promote the International Day against Nuclear Tests (29 August). Credit: CTBTO*

NEW YORK (IDN) – On December 2, 2009, the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly declared August 29 the *International Day against Nuclear Tests* by unanimously adopting resolution 64/35. The resolution was initiated by the Republic of Kazakhstan, together with a large number of sponsors and cosponsors with a view to commemorating the closure of the Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test site on August 29, 1991.

The 74th session of the General Assembly convened a High-Level Meeting on September 9, 2019 as follow-up on events worldwide on August 29, the official International Day against Nuclear Tests. That day is highly symbolic: it is the anniversary of Kazakhstan’s closure of the former Soviet Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in 1991, and the date the first Soviet nuclear test was conducted there in 1949.

The resolution calls for increasing awareness and education “about the effects of nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions and the need for their cessation as one of the means of achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.”

Moreover, “convinced that nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons are the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of nuclear weapons,” the General Assembly designated September 26 as the *International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons*, which is devoted to furthering the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, through the mobilization of international efforts.

The international instrument to put an end to all forms of nuclear testing is the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). But it has yet to enter into force. Because eight states have not ratified the treaty: China, Egypt, Iran, Israel and the United States (which have signed the Treaty), India, North Korea and Pakistan (which have not signed it).

CTBT bans all nuclear explosions – everywhere, by everyone. The Treaty was negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva and adopted by the UN General Assembly. It opened for signature on September 24, 1996. Since then, it has reached near-universality: with 184 countries having signed and 168 countries having ratified the Treaty.

When the Treaty enters into force it provides a legally binding norm against nuclear testing. The Treaty also helps prevent human suffering and environmental damages caused by nuclear testing.

In his opening remarks to the High-Level Meeting, UN Secretary-General António Guterres noted that the CTBT is one of the most widely supported treaties and that its verification mechanism—the International Monitoring System—has helped facilitate peace and security. He urged the eight states whose ratification of the Treaty is still required for it to come into force to do so urgently.

“In the 21st century, nuclear testing is simply not acceptable,” Guterres said, pointing to its grave human and environmental impacts. “And it is not acceptable to prevent the entry into force of the CTBT and, thereby, withhold a valuable restraint on the qualitative and quantitative proliferation of nuclear weapons and a practical step towards their total elimination.”

As the Secretary-General recognized in his disarmament agenda *Securing Our Common Future* launched on May 24, 2018, the norm against testing is an example of a measure that serves both disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.

By constraining the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, the CTBT puts a brake on the arms race. It also serves as a powerful normative barrier against potential States that might seek to develop, manufacture and subsequently acquire nuclear weapons in violation of their non-proliferation commitments.

“The CTBT is a crucial, and long overdue, step that will help to ensure the continued vitality of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime,” said CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo. “If we work together, I am confident we can achieve this noble aim. Let us mark this International Day against Nuclear Tests by strengthening our commitment to put an end to nuclear tests.”

In his keynote speech, CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo noted that the International Day against Nuclear Tests provides an opportunity to send a clear and unmistakable message to the international community that our work is not yet done.

“The business of ending nuclear tests for all time remains unfinished,” Zerbo added. “It is my hope that today’s commemoration will help to inspire countries to take concrete measures that will allow us to finally reach our objective of a world free from the dangers of nuclear testing. And the only path that will lead us to this noble goal is through the verifiability of the CTBT and its universalization.”

Zerbo commended the courage and leadership of Kazakhstan’s First President Nursultan Nazarbayev, who made the historic decision to renounce the possession of nuclear arms, send former Soviet nuclear warheads in Kazakhstan to Russia, and permanently close the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site.

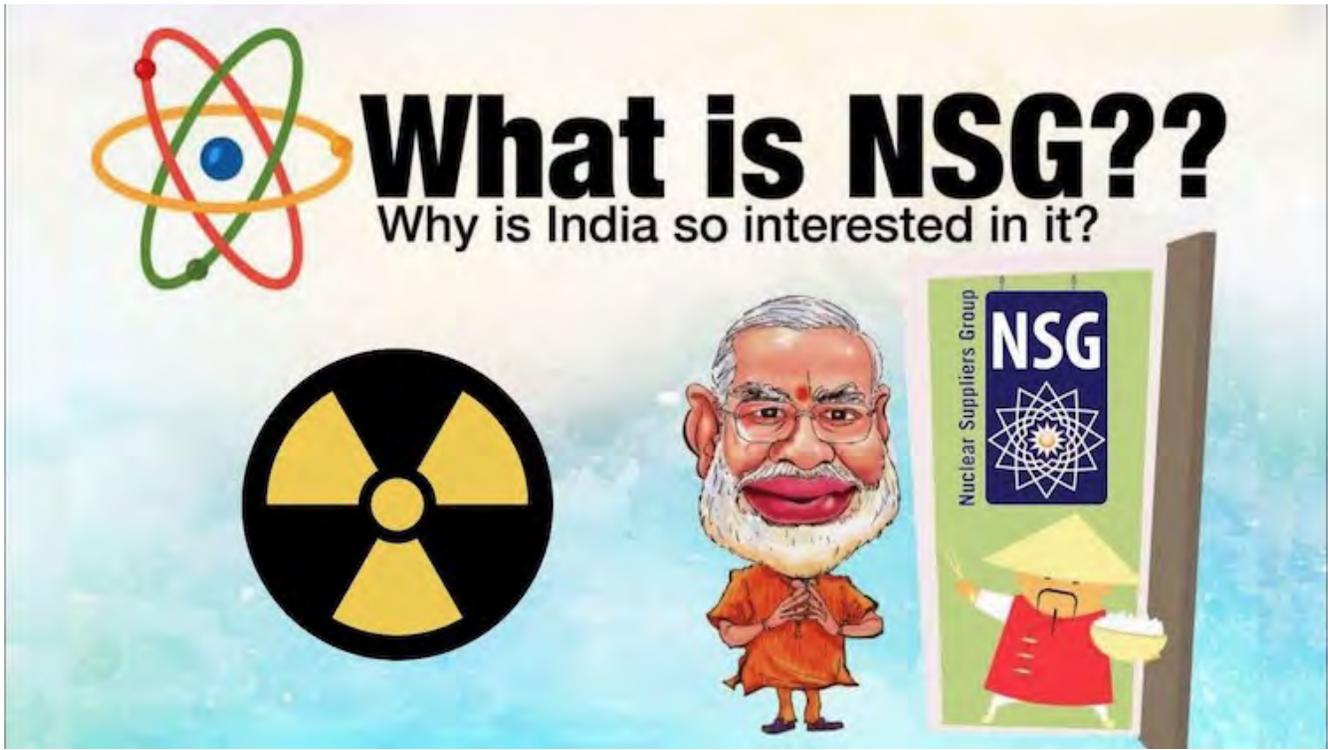
He also paid tribute to the bravery and determination of the people of Kazakhstan—scientists, civil servants, artists and ordinary citizens – who were affected by the nearly 500 nuclear tests carried out at Semipalatinsk, and who played an important role in the closing of the test site.

“Today, we honour the memory of all victims of nuclear tests and pay our respects to those whose lives have been adversely affected. We owe it to them, and to generations unborn, not to repeat the horror of nuclear tests and nuclear weapon explosions,” said María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, outgoing President of the General Assembly.

She opened the meeting by noting that “the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty by the General Assembly in 1996 was an important moment in our quest for disarmament”. The UNGA President urged the remaining Annex 2 states to ratify the CTBT, “so that this crucial treaty can enter into force”. [IDN-InDepthNews – 13 September 2019]

## UN Denies Endorsement of India in NSG-Nuclear Suppliers Group

*By Shanta Roy*



*Image credit: Defence Squad / YouTube*

NEW YORK (IDN) – India, Pakistan and Israel, three countries armed with nuclear weapons, are not recognized as nuclear weapon states by the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) – a “privilege” bestowed only on the world’s five major nuclear powers: the U.S., UK, Russia, France and China, which are also members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group

But in a report titled “António Guterres backs India’s coveted NSG membership”, the New Delhi-based Economic Times said “India has received a shot in the arm for its civil nuclear program from the UN, with Secretary-General António Guterres announcing support for Delhi’s NSG membership in his meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi” (on August 25).

Asked to confirm the Secretary-General’s endorsement of India’s membership in the NSG, UN deputy spokesperson Farhan Haq told IDN: “No, that topic was not discussed in their meeting.” But the report of India’s membership in the NSG has triggered concerns from several nuclear experts.

Jayantha Dhanapala, a former Sri Lankan Ambassador and UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, told IDN India is a de facto nuclear weapon armed country but NOT DE JURE i.e. India is not a Nuclear weapon state in the eyes of the NPT like the U.S., UK, Russia, France and China.

“Thus, it is denied facilities that NPT recognized nuclear weapon states enjoy. Once it gets into the Nuclear Suppliers Group, it is legitimate,” he said. The NPT, he pointed out, recognizes only five Nuclear weapon states. Israel does not admit that it has nukes.

“Of course, the NPT reflected the status quo at the time it was signed. India chafes over this and tries hard to gain recognition as a nuclear weapon states to belong to the Big Boys Club,” said Dhanapala.

Dr M.V. Ramana, Simons Chair in Disarmament, Global and Human Security and Director at the Liu Institute for Global Issues at the University of British Columbia, told IDN regardless of the veracity of the Indian Prime Minister’s claim about having brought up membership in the NSG with the UN Secretary-General, there are two points that need emphasis.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

First, the Secretary-General cannot really do anything about this. The NSG is a cartel that controls trade in nuclear fuel and technology and it operates by consensus. So all of its 48 members have to agree to any such decision (<https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/NSG>).

There is little chance of such consensus at the moment. So, the Prime Minister's alleged talk with the Secretary-General is just a way to garner some publicity and a way to deflect pressure on India to curb its carbon emissions, said Dr Ramana.

Second, membership of the NSG will have no impact on India's nuclear energy program. Thanks to a waiver that NSG members agreed to in 2008, India can already import nuclear reactors and uranium, he pointed out.

"The reason that nuclear energy is such a small fraction of India's electricity generation—around 3 percent—is because nuclear plants are hugely expensive.

Indeed, imported nuclear power plants are even more expensive than domestically designed ones. So, more imports will only make electricity more costly," Dr Ramana declared.

According to the Washington-based Arms Control Association (ACA), the NSG, established in 1975, is comprised of 48 states that have voluntarily agreed to coordinate their export controls to non-nuclear-weapon states.

The NSG governs the transfers of civilian nuclear material and nuclear-related equipment and technology.

The participants include: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The NSG aims to prevent nuclear exports for commercial and peaceful purposes from being used to make nuclear weapons.

In order to ensure that their nuclear imports are not used to develop weapons, NSG members are expected to forgo nuclear trade with governments that do not subject themselves to confidence-building international measures and inspections, according to ACA.

Alice Slater, who serves on the Board of Directors of World BEYOND War and is the UN NGO Representative of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, told IDN the support for India's membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Groups is a great disservice to the already damaged integrity of the NPT.

The 1970 NPT which requires the existing nuclear weapons states at that time – US, Russia, UK, France, China – to make good faith efforts for nuclear disarmament, in return for a promise from the non-nuclear weapons states not to acquire nuclear weapons was joined by all the countries of the world except for India, Pakistan, and Israel, who then went on to build nuclear arsenals of their own.

The NPT provides that its non-nuclear weapons states parties be given peaceful nuclear power in return for their promise not to acquire nuclear weapons.

But it is very clear, that the sharing of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes is only available to parties who have joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty, said Slater, who is on the Board of the Global Network Against Weapons and Nuclear Power in Space, the Global Council of Abolition 2000, and the Advisory Board of Nuclear Ban-US.

The intended purpose of the NSG, which is to control the sale of dual-use nuclear technology, has created nothing more than a leaky sieve to compensate for the fatally flawed NPT which authorizes an "inalienable right" to non-nuclear weapons states to acquire the keys to their own bomb factories in the form of so-called "peaceful nuclear power".

The new exception NSG is creating, by allowing a non-member of the NPT to join, deals a grave blow to the already limited integrity of the Non-Proliferation Treaty which has failed to enforce the promise given by the nuclear weapons states parties for nuclear disarmament, she added.

Tariq Rauf, former IAEA Point of Contact with the NSG, told IDN: First of all, this report in the Indian media has been denied by the UN in New York. "I suspect that the Indian media gave a spin to the matter. This is not new, in the past Indian media have reported either falsely, deliberately in my view; or given a positive spin regarding international support for India's membership in the NSG. Whether this is directly or indirectly supported by the Ministry of External Affairs is open to question," he said.

Second, in his opinion, it should be understood that it is beyond the authority and mandate of the United Nations or the IAEA, or any other international organization, to endorse or oppose membership of any Member State in self-appointed groupings such as the NSG, or MTCR, or Wassenaar Arrangement or the Australia Group.

These self-styled export control groups, respectively for nuclear, missiles, conventional and chemical/biological goods, are not subject to the UN Charter, have not been endorsed by the UN General Assembly; and in the case of the NSG, it has not been endorsed by the NPT States Parties through agreed outcome documents of Review Conferences or by the IAEA General Conference, he added.

Though the IAEA publishes NSG guidelines in the form of Information circulars (INFCIRC/254), these documents are merely for information and INFCIRCS can be requested to be circulated by any IAEA Member State and they have no legal standing, said Rauf, a former Senior Advisor to the Chair of the Disarmament Committee at the 2015 NPT Review Conference and Head of the Verification and Security Policy Coordination Office at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and served as the Agency's Point-of-Contact to the NSG.

Third, NSG member States, calling themselves PGs for participating governments, are in violation of their own guidelines and policies when in 2008 under tremendous pressure and bullying by the Bush administration agreed to give India a "waiver" to NSG guidelines and allow trade in nuclear items with India.

Among the conditions imposed on India were to: (a) separate military and civilian nuclear facilities and place the latter under IAEA safeguards, implement the IAEA Additional Protocol and enact export control domestic legislation, he added.

"India sent the IAEA a list of 22 current and to be constructed civil nuclear facilities to be put under item-specific (not comprehensive safeguards), but excluded all heavy-water (CANDU copy) reactors built by India that can be used to generate plutonium, as well as a plutonium reprocessing facility; and made acceptance of safeguards conditional on receiving foreign nuclear cooperation. If there is no such cooperation, then no safeguards,"

Also, he pointed out, the NSG "waiver" was and is in violation of NPT 1995 and 2000 agreement by consensus not to engage in nuclear cooperation with a State that is not a NPT non-nuclear-weapon State with full-scope (comprehensive) safeguards in place.

Fourth, the 2008 NSG waiver did not recognize nor legitimize India as a nuclear armed State, it merely allowed for trade in nuclear items. But India could well give it such an interpretation, which it has.

Fifth, both India followed by Pakistan have formally applied for NSG membership, many NSG PGs are inclined to admit India but not Pakistan, he noted.

Rauf said China and Turkey have held up consensus in the NSG on Indian membership, arguing that either both or none are admitted. If India gets in, it can deny consensus for Pakistan getting in.

The NSG continues to struggle with this matter. The NSG has been looking at a "criteria-driven approach" regarding admittance of new members, but some PGs are opposed to such an approach as they want to retain the option to deny membership even if a State fulfills the criteria as these PGs may oppose on political grounds.

"It is highly regrettable that NSG PGs are not inclined to make adherence by membership candidates to the CTBT (Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty) a requirement, even though the PGs themselves have signed the CTBT (but not all have ratified, such as China and the U.S.)," he declared. [IDN-InDepthNews – 05 September 2019]

## Kazakhstan Honours Advocates of a Nuclear-Free World

*By Ramesh Jaura with reports from Katsuhiko Asagiri*



*Photo (left to right): Ms Zerbo, her husband Nazarbayev Prize laureate CTBTO Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo, Kazakh President Tokayev, First President Nazarbayev, Ms Yukika Amano, widow of late IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano, Nazarbayev Prize laureate and his brother Mari Amano. Credit: akorda.kz.*

BERLIN | NUR-SULTAN (IDN) – Kazakhstan, widely acknowledged as a leader in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, has availed of this year’s International Day against Nuclear Tests to honour two eminent advocates of a world free of nuclear weapons. The Central Asian republic was one-time holder of the world’s fourth nuclear arsenal as a part of the Soviet Union, defunct since 1991.

This year when the UN officially commemorates the Tenth Anniversary of the Day, on August 29, Kazakhstan’s First President Nursultan Nazarbayev presented to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) Executive Secretary Lassina Zerbo and the relatives of late International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Yukiya Amano, who passed away on July 18, 2019, the Nazarbayev Prize for a Nuclear-Free-World and Global Security in Nur-Sultan.



To receive the Prize, members of late Yukiya Amano’s family arrived in Kazakhstan – widow Yukika Amano and brother, former Permanent Representative of Japan in Geneva, Mari Amano. Established in 2016, the Nazarbayev Prize is awarded to

prominent individuals for their contribution to nuclear disarmament and global security. The first laureate of the Prize was King Abdullah II of Jordan for his contribution to promoting the creation of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East and the acceptance of 1.5 million Syrian refugees.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev praised the significant efforts undertaken by late Amano and Zerbo towards nuclear non-proliferation and security.

“Heading the IAEA, Yukiya Amano played a key role in the creation of the low-enriched uranium bank in Kazakhstan and contributed to the settlement of Iran’s nuclear issue. The activities and efforts of Lassina Zerbo have resulted in the near completion of the international monitoring network for the comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. He also took the initiative to establish the CTBTO Group of Eminent Persons and the CTBTO Youth Group,” said Tokayev.

“This year marks the 25th anniversary since Kazakhstan signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, our country’s membership in the IAEA as well as the 10th anniversary since the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia,” said Tokayev.



*Photo: The Prize ceremony took place in the Nazarbayev Center in Nur-Sultan. The collage includes photos from Katsuhiro Asagiri and Yukie Asagiri | INPS Japan*

The ceremony was attended by prominent figures, such as the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy, member of the Prize Award Committee Franco Frattini, the IAEA Deputy Director General Mary Alice Heyward, former Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Ahmet Uzumcu, Deputy Chairman of the Nuclear Threat Initiative Foundation, former UK

Secretary of Defense Desmond Brown, former UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Sha Zukang, and co-chairman of the International Peace Bureau Reiner Brown.

The participants of the event noted the importance and relevance of the Prize, the key role of the First President of Kazakhstan – Leader of the Nation – in Kazakhstan’s achievements in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, his activities as a world-class political figure who is pleased not only for the interests of his country, but also the entire world community, as well as an invaluable contribution to strengthening the regional and international security.



The award ceremony coincided with the August 29 International Day against Nuclear Tests, which was unanimously designated by the United Nations in 2009.

The date commemorates the closure of the Semipalatinsk test site, where 456 Soviet nuclear tests were conducted over 40 years. Nearly 1.5 million people in Kazakhstan have suffered from the consequences. Tokayev noted the decision to close the Semipalatinsk test site had “historical significance”.

“Taken against the resistance of the Soviet military elite and individual politicians, the decision of the First President Nazarbayev to close the nuclear test site required great courage and firm will. It has facilitated the entire antinuclear movement,” added Tokayev. In turn, Kazakh First President Nazarbayev said the escalating confrontation between the two nuclear powers, the U.S. and Russia, and their walkout from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty produced “serious negative consequences”.

“The renewed nuclear arms race, including in space, that the two countries started, is of great concern. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty ceased to have effect and Kazakhstan was party to this treaty,” said Nazarbayev.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

He warned that the risk of terrorist groups acquiring nuclear weapons remains the gravest threat. “More than 20 countries of the world keep potentially dangerous nuclear materials and each of them can become a target for destructive forces,” said Nazarbayev.

The world’s nine nuclear-armed states (USA, Russia, China, UK, France, North Korea, India, Pakistan, Israel), he added, do not intend to curtail their programmes. With the increasing global distrust and geopolitical confrontation, the world finds itself in an unprecedentedly difficult stage.

Nazarbayev urged the gathering and the international community to take more vigorous steps towards a nuclear weapons-free world. “We need to revise the archaic concept of strategic stability based on nuclear weapons. We need to create a new nuclear arms control system. It is important to negotiate the development of the Universal Treaty on the Reduction Of Nuclear Weapons,” said Nazarbayev.



He underscored the need to introduce an effective system of legally binding negative security guarantees from the nuclear powers.

“At the same time, members of the nuclear club must commit to a package of obligations and restrictions to adjust their policies in the area of weapons of mass destruction. It is first of all important that they curtail the traditional practice of maintaining and modernising nuclear facilities,” he said. Nazarbayev said the award serves as a reminder

that the future should entail a world without nuclear weapons. In the video address to the gathering, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres thanked Kazakhstan for the efforts.

“A world free of nuclear weapons, including banning on nuclear testing, remains the highest disarmament priority of the UN. Kazakhstan has been strong supporter in this task. I thank former president Nursultan Nazarbayev for his commitment to this cause and the establishment of this prize. This year’s laureates, Yukiya Amano and Lassina Zerbo, richly deserve this recognition,” said Guterres.

The disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime faces “deep and growing challenges,” he said, adding: “The international community must stress in its cooperation to achieve our collective goal – the world without nuclear weapons. I count on your support in securing our future.” [IDN-InDepthNews – 31 August 2019]



*Flag of Kazakhstan*

## Grave Concern About US-Russian Actions Evoking Cold War

*By Santo D. Banerjee*



*Photo: A wide view of the Security Council meeting on threats to international peace and security. 22 August 2019. United Nations, New York. Credit: UN Photo/Manuel Elias.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – While nuclear experts and peace advocates have expressed heightened concern about the collapse of the landmark Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, the United States and Russia are trading accusations over breaching commitments and taking actions evoking Cold War era.

The Treaty was signed by former U.S. President Ronald Reagan and the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987. It required the United States and the Soviet Union to eliminate and permanently forswear all of their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometres.

As Daryl G. Kimball points out, the treaty marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals, eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons, and employ extensive on-site inspections for verification. As a result of the INF Treaty, the United States and the Soviet Union destroyed a total of 2,692 short-, medium-, and intermediate-range missiles by the treaty's implementation deadline of June 1, 1991.

In a heated debate at the Security Council on August 22, 2019, **RUSSIA'S DMITRY A. POLYANSKIY** said that for some time, Moscow and Washington, were

implementing the INF Treaty, however the agreement has become “uncomfortable” to the United States. Meanwhile, the U.S. has developed missiles, based in Romania, making it clear that medium-range rockets could indeed be used in the area — and now, there are no limits on the development and deployment of similar systems, kicking aside the disarmament architecture.

Key figures in the U.S. Administration, he added, have made amply clear that they do not intend to implement the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty) in its current form.

Step by step, the United States is returning to another era and flexing its muscles, he said, and declared: “We are now one step away from an arms race; if you believe [U.S. President] Donald Trump, then America is ready for an arms race.”

He pointed out that the Russian Federation's military budget is much lower than that of the United States — \$700 billion — and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) — more than \$1 trillion. Despite that spending on weapons development has been included in the United States military budget, the Russian Federation has been blamed.

Russia's representative further said that the United States has repeatedly refused to answer Moscow's requests for clarifications on queries about the 9M729 missile. His country also invited the United States to attend a meeting focused on this missile, yet no representatives from Washington, were present.

The U.S. representative [Jonathan Cohen](#) maintained that Russia decided to break its treaty obligations, producing multiple battalions of new missile systems. Despite efforts to implore the Russian Federation to return to the provisions of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the United States made a decision to withdraw.

Describing the current landscape, he said Russia and China would still like a world where the United States exercises restraint while they continue to build their arsenals. What the United States and NATO allies know is that the Russian Federation has violated the now-terminated Treaty, with actions that demonstrate the ability to hit European targets. China has also deployed similar systems, he added.

Highlighting U.S. activities, he said that today, there are no United States ground-launched missiles. Yet, China possesses 2,000 such weapons, which would have violated the INF Treaty if Beijing had been a party to it.

Describing United States missile launch systems that comply with Treaty obligations, he said Russia and China have moved in the opposite direction, developing new nuclear weapons capabilities, amassing more missiles, modernizing their arsenals and adding new weapons, including an underwater drone.

Wondering exactly what caused the nuclear-related explosion in the Russian Federation on August 9, 2019, he highlighted other worrying events triggered by Moscow and Beijing. The United States remains open to effective arms control that goes beyond treaty obligations, he said.

[China's representative at the UN, Zhang Jun](#), said the Russian Federation and the United States should have properly handled their differences over treaty compliance through dialogue.

However, the U.S. withdrawal will have negative effects that extend far beyond the INF Treaty. "It is unacceptable to use China as an excuse for the United States to leave the Treaty, he said, rejecting the baseless accusations made today."

Prominent destabilizing factors are threatening international security, and multilateralism is the key to addressing these challenges. All countries must work towards building a sustainable common future for all humankind and refrain from taking action that could threaten other States' security.

The United States' withdrawal intends to destroy the Treaty and assert unilateral actions, including by deploying missiles. For its part, China is in compliance with relevant treaties. All countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals should urgently fulfil their disarmament obligations, he said, encouraging Moscow and Washington to return to dialogue, reduce their arsenals and create conditions for advancing disarmament goals, including through extending the current New START Treaty. For its part, China pursues a national defence policy, has participated in multilateral arms control and opposes any kind of arms race.

Poland's Joanna Wronecka, Council President for August, spoke in her national capacity to stress that arms control and disarmament commitments must be verified and observed by all sides in good faith. Recalling that almost 3,000 missiles have been removed and verifiably destroyed under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, she expressed regret over the failure of United States efforts to preserve it.

"Erosion of this significant element of the European security architecture constitutes yet another challenge for international security," she stressed, emphasizing that Russia bears the sole responsibility for the instrument's demise and voicing regret that the country has shown no willingness nor taken steps to ensure its implementation in an effective, verifiable and transparent manner.

Poland, like other allies, supported the United States decision to withdraw from the INF Treaty, she said, calling it "a logical and understandable reaction to Russia's actions".

Earlier, South Africa's representative to the UN, Jerry Matthews Matjila, voiced concern that some nuclear-weapons States insist on modernizing their nuclear arsenals and means of delivery in flagrant violation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

"It is indeed deeply troubling that a long-established arms control instrument such as the [Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty] has unravelled, placing not only the region of Europe but the whole world at risk of nuclear war," he said.

Urging the United States and the Russian Federation to resume discussions on a New START Treaty before its expiration in 2021, he pointed out that South Africa is the only country to have developed and then voluntarily eliminated its nuclear weapons.

Calling on the United Nations community to sign and ratify the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), he stressed that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes and warned that a selective focus on the latter — coupled with lack of progress on the former — weakens the non-proliferation regime.

Briefing the Security Council on "threats to international peace and security/missile", Izumi Nakamitsu, the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs regretted that the INF Treaty's recent demise had removed one of the few constraints on the development and deployment of destabilizing classes of missiles.

She stressed that the scrapping of the Treaty should not become the catalyst for renewed and unconstrained competition in missile development, acquisition and proliferation. All the more so, as "today, only the Russian Federation and the United States are subject to legally binding restrictions on the number of certain missiles they may possess".

Echoing the Secretary-General's call for all States to urgently seek agreement on a new common path for international arms control, she said a growing number of countries — including those not party to existing multilateral arrangements — have acquired and developed their ballistic missile capabilities.

Indeed, more than 20 countries now possess ballistic missiles with capabilities that exceed the threshold for "nuclear capable" as defined by the Missile Technology Control Regime. "And nuclear-armed States are actively pursuing novel missile and missile defence capabilities with unclear and potentially negative consequences for international peace and security," she declared.

The development of weapons systems using missile technology that can manoeuvre at hypersonic speeds could further undermine security and spark a destabilizing arms race, Nakamitsu warned. [IDN-InDepthNews – 28 August 2019]

## The Devastating Arms Race Rages Unabated

*Viewpoint by Somar Wijayadasa\**



*Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed." – U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower in 'The Chance for Peace' address in April 1953.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The arms race has reached a new dimension as the United States President Donald Trump withdrew from the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

President Vladimir Putin warned, on August 5, 2019, that Russia would respond in kind if the United States develops short and intermediate-range, land-based nuclear missiles following the demise of the Cold War-era arms control treaty.

Putin said: "If Russia obtains reliable information whereby the United States completes the development of these systems and starts to produce them, Russia will have no option other than to engage in a full-scale effort to develop similar missiles".

Thanks to a couple of treaties – such as the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) and the INF Treaty between the U.S. and the former Soviet Union – the stockpile of nuclear weapons has been reduced from a high of 70,300 in 1986 to a total of 13,865. But 6,185 and 6,500 nuclear warheads, the U.S. and Russia respectively own are ample to scorch our earth several times over.

The world knows the inhumanely destructive power of nuclear weapons that the U.S. unleashed on Hiroshima on August 6 and Nagasaki on August 9, 1945, and from the devastation caused by the accidents in Chernobyl and Fukushima.

Since its inception in 1945, the United Nations strived to abolish nuclear weapons to accomplish its noble goal "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

Finally, on July 7, 2017, the UN adopted a Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) that seeks to "prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination".

However, the five nuclear weapons wielding permanent members – USA, Russia, Britain, France and China – of the UN Security Council, body charged with the maintenance of international peace and security, failed to support that noble effort.

In the past, many world leaders – including U.S. Presidents – have spoken in support of banning the nuclear weapon. For example, John Kennedy said that these nuclear weapons “must be abolished before they abolish us”; Ronald Reagan said “We must never stop at all until we see the day when nuclear arms have been banished from the face of the Earth”. Lofty words but no action.

In a 2009 Prague speech, President Barack Obama vowed “concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons”. However, after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize for 2009, he committed to spend one trillion dollars over the next 30 years for two new bomb factories, new warheads and delivery systems that Trump plans to upstage.

That impetuous plan pushed Russia, China and other countries to build even more nuclear weapons – especially, when the threat of a nuclear exchange by accident is greater than ever.

The whole world knows about the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons but the power hungry warmongers (the nuclear powers) pretend to be oblivious to the outcome of a nuclear war.

If the majority of the people of this world despise the nuclear bomb, demand those be eliminated, why on earth do nuclear powers absolutely ignore the UN efforts, disregard people’s wishes, and strive to make more advanced nuclear weapons?

Do they think that more nuclear weapons would resolve the millions of problems – death and destruction from wars, refugees, mass migration, poverty and hunger?

### ***Dispensable military spending on armaments***

Saying that the “The world is arming itself to the teeth”, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), reported that in 2018, Global military spending rose to \$1.8 trillion – the highest level since 1988.

In 2018, the U.S. led the world in military spending reaching \$649 billion – i.e. as much as the next eight countries combined. Other big spenders are China (\$250), Saudi Arabia (\$67.6), India (\$66.5), France (\$63.8) and Russia (\$61.4) – in billions of dollars.

The Economist reported that the boost reflected the Trump administration’s embrace of what it calls “great power competition” with Russia and China—requiring fancier, pricier weapons.

SIPRI reported that the U.S. and Russia export globally over half of all weapons, and “the top 100 arms companies have sold over 5 trillion dollars’ worth of arms since 2002 while China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States are collectively responsible for over 70% of the arms trade”.

In 'The Chance for Peace' address delivered on April 16, 1953 before the American Society of Newspaper Editors, President Dwight Eisenhower, who was a five-star general in the United States Army and served as the Supreme Commander in Europe during World War II, said: “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed.”

This world in arms is not spending money alone, he added. “It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children. ... This is not a way of life at all, in any true sense. Under the cloud of threatening war, it is humanity hanging from a cross of iron.”

### ***Military conflicts: Human suffering***

Since 1945, there have been some 250 major wars in which over 50 million people have been killed, tens of millions made homeless, and countless millions injured and bereaved.

In 2014, David Swanson wrote in the American Journal of Public Health that, “Since the end of World War II, there have been 248 armed conflicts in 153 locations around the world. The United States launched 201 overseas military operations between the end of World War II and 2001, and since then, others, including Afghanistan and Iraq”.

In 2016 alone, 100,000 people died – at a financial cost of an estimated \$14.3 trillion, or 12.6% of the global economy.

Tom Mayer, a peace activist said, “US military intervention has been a calamity in the Middle East. They have destroyed Iraq, destabilized Libya, fostered dictatorship in Egypt, accelerated civil war in Syria, and the destruction of Yemen, and helped squelch a pro-democracy movement in Bahrain”.

After a decade of death, devastation, mayhem and millions of casualties in Iraq and Afghanistan, Presidents Obama and Trump revealed that the wars in the Middle East have cost American taxpayers nearly seven trillion dollars. Where is the promised peace, democracy and freedom?

While such a colossal amount of money is wasted on weapons and military conflicts, the infrastructure of schools, roads and bridges around the world – even in capitalist countries – continue to collapse.

### ***Invest in people: Not in weapons that kill them***

According to the United Nations, more than 1.3 billion people live in extreme poverty (i.e. less than \$1.25 a day), more than 2 billion people don't have access to clean water, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty, and 805 million people worldwide (including in capitalist countries) do not have enough food to eat.

UNESCO estimates that 171 million people could be lifted out of extreme poverty if they left school with basic reading skills. And, with even more education, world poverty could be cut in half.

The World Bank estimates that climate change has the power to push more than 100 million people into poverty over the next ten years. As it is, climate events like drought, flooding, and severe storms disproportionately impact communities already living in poverty.

Why don't we utilize those “trillions of dollars” we waste on weapons and useless wars on more momentous life-and-death issues – to uplift the poor, build crumbling roads and bridges, improve public transportation, provide healthcare, and re-build schools that are falling apart?

### ***President Trump should “walk the talk”***

In April, during a meeting with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, Trump expressed an interest in a new arms control pact with China and Russia to reduce "ridiculous" military spending and arms production.

Trump said, “As you know China is spending a lot of money on military, so are we, so is Russia and those three countries I think can come together and stop the spending and spend on things that maybe are more productive toward long-term peace. I think it's much better if we all got together and we didn't make these weapons”.

Though such a noble idea, his dicey actions – largest ever military budget; withdrawal from the INF Treaty that eliminated their intermediate & short range missiles; withdrawal from Iranian Nuclear Deal that rolled back and contained Iran's nuclear program; dreadful sanctions on Iran, Cuba and Venezuela; sale of military hardware to Saudi Arabia that wages a catastrophic and inhumane war in Yemen; Trade and Tariff wars with several countries, to name a few – are terribly warped.

### ***Join the UN Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons***

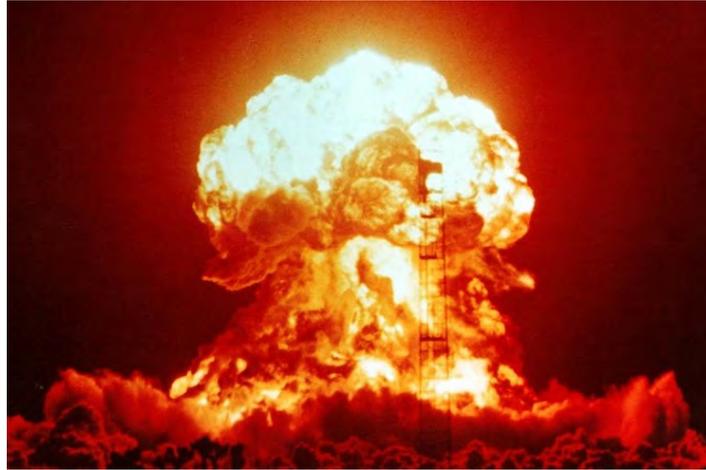
Before a nuclear exchange occurs by accident, miscalculation or even intent by an unhinged world leader, I wishfully hope that the Nobel Peace Prize aspirant, President Trump, would bring the world leaders together to support the UN Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to eliminate ALL nuclear weapons.

That may be faster and easier than denuclearizing North Korea or stopping Iran or other "rogue" countries from acquiring the nuclear bomb.

*\*Somar Wijayadasa, an International lawyer was a UNESCO delegate to the UN General Assembly from 1985-1995, and was Representative of UNAIDS at the United Nations from 1995-2000. [IDN-InDepthNews – 10 August 2019]*

## Australia Urged to Sign and Ratify the Nuclear Weapons Ban Treaty

*By Neena Bhandari*



SYDNEY (IDN) – Australia must sign and ratify the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), says a new report released here by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), the Australian-founded initiative which won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize.

The report comes amidst growing international tension with important agreements, including the 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) – widely known as the Iran nuclear deal – and the 1988 Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty between the United States and Russia, being undermined.

The JCPOA was signed after protracted negotiations between Iran and six world powers comprising the five permanent members of the UN Security Council – China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, United States – plus Germany together with the European Union.

“The international legal architecture surrounding nuclear weapons is collapsing, with the INF Treaty and Iran Deal under serious threat and no disarmament negotiations underway between nuclear-armed states,” ICAN Australia Director and report editor, Gem Romuld, tells IDN.

All nuclear weapon-possessing states are continuing to modernize their nuclear arsenals though there has been overall decrease in the number of nuclear warheads in 2018, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook 2019 launched on June 17.

According to SIPRI, at the beginning of 2019, nine states—the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (North Korea)—possessed approximately 13,865 nuclear weapons. Of these 3,750 are deployed with operational forces and nearly 2,000 of these are kept in a state of high operational alert.

Australia does not possess any nuclear weapons, but it subscribes to the doctrine of extended nuclear deterrence under the United States alliance, which is seen as key to Australia’s national security.

Romuld says: “Australia is currently acting as an enabler for the US’ nuclear weapons program, but this can and must change. The ban treaty provides the tool for Australia to shift direction and meaningfully contribute to the international rules-based order governing nuclear weapons.”

The Treaty, which was adopted by the UN in July 2017, currently has 70 signatories and 25 states (the latest being Bolivia) have ratified it. It is expected to enter into force in 2020 and become international law after the 50th ratification.

Explaining the country’s policy, Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) spokesperson says: “We do not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as it does not involve the countries that possess nuclear weapons and risks undermining the cornerstone Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime.”

Australia believes the TPNW would not eliminate a single nuclear weapon and it would be inconsistent with Australia's U.S. alliance obligations. The DFAT website states that Australia would continue to advocate for practical steps towards nuclear disarmament, including through strengthening the NPT, particularly in the approach to the 2020 NPT Review Conference, and coordinating the cross-regional 12-member Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI).

ICAN's report, *Choosing Humanity: Why Australia must join the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*, addresses concerns and myths surrounding TPNW and suggests a practical pathway for signature and ratification. It builds a compelling argument for Australia to play an active role in the stigmatization, prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons by joining the treaty.

Sue Haseldine, a Kokatha-Mula Indigenous woman, was about three years old when the United Kingdom began conducting nuclear weapons tests in Maralinga and Emu Field in South Australia and Monte Bello Islands, off the Western Australian coast. The 12 major tests, conducted between 1952 and 1963, contaminated a huge area, including the Koonibba mission near Ceduna in South Australia, where Sue lived with her five sisters, two brothers and her extended family.

"The radiation from the first atomic bomb called 'Totem 1' spread far and wide. I am convinced that the deformities and birth defects in my family, premature deaths in the community and incidence of cancer, respiratory and thyroid problems have been because of the radiation poisoning. It doesn't matter if you are Aboriginal or not, everyone in this part of the country has been impacted by premature sickness and death in their families," says 68-year-old Sue, who remembers elders in the community telling her about the healthy life of hunting for wild game and collecting bush fruits prior to the Tests.

"The Australian Government owes an apology to all people. It should waste no time in signing TPNW so this never happens again," maintains Sue, who has been suffering from chronic thyroid problems.

The report is being launched this week to commemorate the 74th anniversary of the United States detonating the atomic bomb on Hiroshima (August 6, 1945) and Nagasaki (August 9, 1945) in Japan.

Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia) president and ICAN Board Member Sue Wareham tells IDN, Australia is currently implicated by allowing nuclear weapons targeting to occur at Pine Gap in the Northern Territory as well as contributing to global danger. "This also brings the risk of nuclear attack on Australia," she adds.

"The report outlines a feasible and realistic pathway by which this part of Pine Gap's functioning could be ceased. It is imperative, both morally and for our own and others' security, that Australia choose the path of nuclear disarmament rather than nuclear threats."

Australia hosts the Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap, a U.S.-constructed and financed intelligence facility operated by the U.S. National Reconnaissance Office, and the Joint Geological and Geophysical Research Station, a U.S. Air Force operated seismic monitoring station, in the Northern Territory.

Seventy-nine percent of the public supports Australia joining the treaty, according to Ipsos Update – November 2018. The Australian Labour Party had committed to sign and ratify the treaty at its December 2018 national conference if it had won the May 2019 Federal election.

ICAN Co-Founder and ICAN Australia Board Member Dimity Hawkins tells IDN: "We need governments, media and people willing to return to a braver stance on nuclear disarmament, to engage in a new constructive dialogue around the elimination of nuclear weapons.

A new political will in Australia must be built to see the deadlock on this issue end. People the world over are closely watching what Australia does on this Treaty. It is vital that we see this issue progress beyond denial and partisanship."

"Through this Treaty we have a pathway forward that not only offers a comprehensive way to stop these weapons, but addresses the humanitarian impacts, with positive obligations for environmental remediation and victim assistance," Hawkins adds.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

In the past, Australia has played an important role in efforts to achieve multilateral disarmament treaties, most notably with chemical weapons. Australia joined the treaties banning landmines and cluster munitions even when the U.S. had opposed them.

In the report, national health organisations, international legal experts, parliamentarians from all sides, faith leaders and others endorse Australia signing and ratifying the Treaty.

Former High Court judge and the report's contributing author, Michael Kirby, tells IDN: "In Australia, virtually for the first time, we are currently seeing the intrusion of religion into the public space and the display of public prayers by political leaders. In my view, it would be better if they converted their public prayers (and hostility to nuclear-weapons control) into urgent engagement with effective international action to dismantle nuclear stockpiles and prohibit the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. Like feisty New Zealand, Australia should sign and ratify the Ban Treaty."

Besides New Zealand, Thailand and the Philippines have signed the Treaty without causing any disruption to their military cooperation with the U.S.

The report notes that only luck has prevented a nuclear launch since 1945. Extremists, hackers and unstable political leaders further worsen the odds.

The advocates of the treaty argue that TPNW provides fresh impetus and a practical pathway to disarmament. The Treaty complements existing international treaties on nuclear weapons, in particular the 1959 Antarctic Treaty, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, the 1968 NPT, the 1971 Seabed Treaty, the 1996 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the five treaties establishing regional nuclear-weapon-free zones.

Australia is a state party to all of the aforementioned treaties, including the 1985 South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Rarotonga. [IDN-InDepthNews – 07 August 2019]



*Sydney CC BY 2.0*

## Growing Concern about US-Russian Disarmament Treaties

*By Jamshed Baruah*



*Photo: The then Soviet inspectors and their American counterparts scrutinize Pershing II missiles in 1989.*

*Credit: Wikimedia Commons*

NEW YORK (IDN) – In his agenda for disarmament, Securing Our Common Future, the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres calls for reinvigorated dialogue, serious negotiations and a return to a common vision leading towards nuclear disarmament.

Next year, over 190 States Parties will gather in New York for the 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and mark 50 years of this cornerstone of nuclear disarmament.

According to experts, there are significant challenges to be overcome if this conference is to be successful – in spite of unceasingly deteriorating international security climate which does not bode well.

“Withdrawing from this landmark treaty is shortsighted and will ultimately undermine the security of the United States and its allies,” warned physicist David Wright, co-director of the Global Security Program at the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), in the run-up to August 2, the day of U.S. withdrawal from Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty taking effect.

Signed by President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1987, the treaty prohibits short- and medium-range ground-launched missiles carrying

nuclear or conventional warheads, and the launchers of such missiles.

Dumping the INF Treaty, Wright cautioned further, “will increase tensions between the United States and Russia and open the door to a competition in conventionally armed missiles that will undermine stability”.

He drew attention to the fact that the landmark Treaty, which President Donald Trump ill-advisedly decided to scrap, resulted in the elimination of 2,692 U.S. and Soviet nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers.

Experts concede that there appears to be evidence of Russia having violated the Treaty by testing a new ground-launched cruise missile. But Russian complaints about U.S. missile defence systems in Poland and Romania “also have merit”, they say.

These systems are intended to launch interceptor missiles but appear to be capable of launching cruise missiles as well – and deploying the launchers violates the treaty.

The U.S. has apparently not been willing to discuss this issue with Russia in an effort to resolve the concerns of both nations and preserve the treaty. To claim that the U.S. is justified in pulling out of the treaty because

of Russian violations does not, therefore, take the full picture into account, experts argue.

According to Kingston Reif, director for disarmament policy at the Arms Control Association (ACA), the fact is that in February, the Trump administration "recklessly announced" its intent to withdraw the United States from the INF Treaty without a viable diplomatic, economic, or military strategy to prevent Russia from deploying additional and new types of prohibited missiles in the absence of the treaty. "Rushing to build our own INF-range missiles in the absence of such a strategy and without a place to put them doesn't make sense," Reif stressed.

ACA experts said, the U.S. Defense Department has requested nearly \$100 million in fiscal year 2020 to develop three new missile systems that would exceed the range limits of the INF Treaty. The Democratic-led House of Representatives has expressed concern about the rationale for the missiles. The House versions of the fiscal year 2020 National Defense Authorization Act and defense appropriations bill zeroed out the Pentagon's funding request for the missiles.

"Without the INF treaty, there needs to be a more serious U.S. and NATO arms control plan to avoid a new Euromissile race," says Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. NATO, he adds, could declare as a bloc that no alliance members will field any INF Treaty-prohibited missiles or any equivalent new nuclear capabilities in Europe so long as Russia does not deploy treaty-prohibited systems where they could hit NATO territory.

UCS's Wright says, what apparently underlies Trump's decision is the administration's aversion to negotiated agreements that in any way constrain U.S. weapons systems. "But what we've gotten from this treaty is the destruction of 1,846 Soviet missiles, in exchange for 846 U.S. missiles, and an agreement that has prevented a buildup of these missiles for more than three decades. Working to resolve the issues around the treaty is a better move for U.S. security than ending it."

Walking out of the INF Treaty leaves New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) as the only bilateral nuclear arms agreement between the U.S and Russia. If President Trump pulls out of that treaty as well or allows it to lapse, it will be the first time since 1972 that the two countries will be operating without any mutual constraints on their nuclear forces, cautions Wright.

"Without the INF Treaty, as well as the soon expiring New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), there would be no legally binding, verifiable limits on the world's two largest nuclear arsenals for the first time in nearly half a century," warns Thomas Countryman, former assistant secretary of state for international security and nonproliferation and chair of the Arms Control Association's board of directors.

Swiss disarmament expert Oliver Thränert points out that the New START agreement on the limitation of deployed strategic nuclear weapons expires on February 5, 2021. The parties could agree to an extension for up to five years.

"But this would be like putting a band-aid on the gaping bullet wound that is rapidly growing nuclear proliferation. To apply a really effective bandage, we would need a completely new concept for nuclear arms control," adds Thränert who heads the think tank at the Center for Security Studies (CSS) at ETH Zurich.

There are two key reasons as to why a new concept for nuclear arms control is necessary, explains the Swiss expert.

First, nuclear arms control must be multilateral rather than just bilateral in the future. The reason: Unlike during the Cold War, Europe no longer plays a central role in today's global conflicts. Asia's importance has increased exponentially. And this also applies to nuclear arms. Although China, India, and Pakistan are still some way behind the U.S. and Russia when it comes to the size of their nuclear arsenal, they are steadily catching up and can therefore no longer be ignored.

"In this sense, the Trump administration's deliberations about the inclusion of China (at the very least) in future treaties are certainly not misguided. From Washington's perspective, such a step is, in fact, almost mandatory, since Beijing has superseded Moscow as the big challenge of the 21st century," opines Thränert.

Second, he argues, future arms control will no longer be able to focus solely on nuclear weapons. Other technologies are increasingly influencing strategic stability. These include missile defence; long-range, conventional precision weapons; antisubmarine defence; systems to detect and track mobile intercontinental ballistic missiles. The whole gamut of cyber-related challenges and the role of space is also growing in importance. [IDN-InDepthNews – 31 July 2019]

## Caribbean States Vow to Facilitate Swift Entry into Force of Nuclear Ban Treaty

*By Jaya Ramachandran*



*Photo: Caribbean Experts with Nobel Peace Prize 2017 representatives. Credit: ICAN*

GENEVA (IDN) –Seventy countries have signed and 23 ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) since it was opened for signature at the UN headquarters in New York on September 20, 2017, nearly two-and-a-half months after it was adopted by 122 states. The Treaty will enter into legal force 90 days after 50 nations have signed and ratified it.

The TPNW was adopted in the wake of a decade of advocacy by ICAN, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, and its partners around the world.

For these relentless efforts, ICAN was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2017. ICAN and its partners continue to campaign for at least additional 28 ratifications as a first mandatory step toward swift entry into force of the TPNW.

Its supporters argue that prior to the Treaty's adoption, nuclear weapons were the only weapons of mass destruction not subject to a comprehensive ban, despite their catastrophic, widespread and persistent humanitarian and environmental consequences. The new agreement fills a significant gap in international law.

Against this backdrop, ICAN joined hands with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Guyana to convene in Georgetown the Caribbean Regional Forum to discuss the TPNW, to take stock of the Treaty from a regional perspective, to assess its prospects for advancing nuclear disarmament, global security and humanitarian norms, and to canvass progress toward its entry into force.

The meeting brought together experts from member-states of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) comprising Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St-Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, St-Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

The Caribbean Forum took place at a time of heightened risks of use of nuclear weapons – the highest since the Cold War. Indeed, rising tensions, the modernization of nuclear arsenals, the continued reliance on nuclear weapons in military doctrines and security concepts as well as on high alert postures, and threats regarding the possible use of nuclear weapons are widely seen as increasing the risk of a deliberate or accidental nuclear detonation, noted the 'Georgetown Statement' on June 20, 2019.

Meanwhile, the slow pace of progress toward a nuclear weapon-free world, the continued lack of implementation of nuclear disarmament obligation, notably Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and other agreed steps and actions on nuclear disarmament remain a cause of concern in the region and globally, the Statement warned.

Member States of CARICOM have always been a strong proponent of multilateralism, with a progressive approach to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and have long advocated for a holistic approach to addressing matters of peace and security, recognizing fully the intrinsic link between peace, security and development.

The Georgetown Statement re-emphasized that there cannot be development without peace, while peace is the precondition to development. Based on their principled position, CARICOM was very active in the 'Humanitarian Initiative on Nuclear Weapons' and was the first region to equate humanitarian consequences with the need for a prohibition treaty.

Caribbean States continued to be a leading voice in the negotiating process which resulted in the adoption of the Treaty.

"The TPNW was recognized as a historic achievement, to which countries of the region contributed," the Statement noted. The CARICOM member states were among the first to sign and ratify the Treaty. To date, two CARICOM Member States have ratified the TPNW (Guyana and Saint-Lucia), and three others have signed it (Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines).

Participants in the Forum acknowledged the important role the region has to play by joining the Treaty and contribute to its early entry into force and universal adherence.

No CARICOM State possesses nuclear weapons or claims to be protected by the nuclear weapons of an ally, meaning that all CARICOM States are in full compliance with the prohibitions contained in Article 1 of the TPNW, which states:

"Each State Party undertakes never under any circumstances to:

- (a) Develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;
- (b) Transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly or indirectly;

(c) Receive the transfer of or control over nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices directly or indirectly;

(d) Use or threaten to use nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;

(e) Assist, encourage or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Treaty;

(f) Seek or receive any assistance, in any way, from anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Treaty;

(g) Allow any stationing, installation or deployment of any nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in its territory or at any place under its jurisdiction or control.

The Georgetown Statement noted that the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Tlatelolco Treaty) of 1967, which establishes Latin America and the Caribbean as an internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zone, contains similar prohibitions to those contained in the TPNW.

Thus, signature and ratification of the TPNW by any State party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco should not present any challenges in terms of national implementation. The TPNW aims to transform the regional norm against the possession of nuclear weapons into a global norm.

Participants observed that the TPNW is fully compatible with and complementary to the 1968 NPT and acknowledged the value of the TPNW's unambiguous prohibition of nuclear weapons to advance disarmament and reduce the incentive for proliferation.

The Statement further stated that the TPNW, and efforts to advance nuclear disarmament, support progress in attainment of the UN's 2030 Development Agenda, including 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. "The current expenditure on nuclear weapons by nuclear-armed states – approximately US\$2 trillion over the coming decades – reduces funding for development and achievement of the SDGs," argued the Statement. [IDN-InDepthNews – 30 June 2019]

## Resist Erosion of NPT to Rid the World of Atomic Bombs

Crumbling Security Landscape Ahead of the 2020 Review Conference

*Viewpoint by Sergio Duarte\**



*Photo: Sergio Duarte, then UN High Representative for Disarmament, opening the 6th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), on 24 September 2009, in New York. Photo # 411972. Credit: UN Photo/Sophia Paris.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The forthcoming 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) provides the opportunity to look for lessons to be learned from its history and from its review cycles.

The experience gained in the fifty years of the existence of this instrument should be taken seriously by all members of the international community.

Progress in nuclear disarmament is an essential element to prevent further erosion of the existing disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

It is useful to start by recalling General Assembly Resolution 2288(XXII). Adopted unanimously in 1965, it set out the principles on which the negotiation of the NPT should be based.

According to that resolution, the Treaty to be negotiated should not permit its parties to proliferate nuclear weapons, directly or indirectly, in any form; that it should embody an acceptable balance of responsibilities and obligations of nuclear and non-nuclear Parties; and it should be a step toward the achievement of general and complete disarmament and, more particularly, nuclear disarmament.

Different Parties continue to hold diverging views about the way in which those principles have been

reflected in the letter of the Treaty and about how they have been given actual effect.

The five decades of the existence of the NPT have been haunted by a persistent lack of convergence among the Parties on several issues relevant to its implementation.

One of the consequences of this state of affairs was that five out of the nine Review Conferences held so far could not adopt consensus recommendations on substance in their Final Documents. In most cases, such documents record disagreements, rather than common positions.

Nonetheless, the history of those Conferences shows that substantive agreement on progress in disarmament is indeed possible. In 2000 there was consensus on “Thirteen Practical Steps” and on the “unequivocal undertaking” by the nuclear-weapon States to achieve nuclear disarmament.

In 2010 the Review Conference succeeded in adopting an Action Plan which includes meaningful steps for the elimination of nuclear weapons and recommended action on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, following the resolution adopted fifteen years earlier. The prospect of concrete steps in that direction was a crucial element to achieve the indefinite extension

of the Treaty in 1995. Unfortunately, the political will to actually implement those agreements was never really to be found. Then 2010 Review Conference also recorded the unanimous concern of the Parties with the “catastrophic” consequences of a nuclear detonation.

Unfortunately, like some of its predecessors, the III Session of the Preparatory Committee from April 29 to May 10, 2019 again ended without the adoption of substantive recommendations to the forthcoming Review Conference to be held at the UN Headquarters in New York from April 27 to May 22, 2020. Entrenched positions, together with renewed mistrust and open hostility among Parties prevented support for a draft report containing such substantive recommendations.

The Chair, Ambassador Syed Md Hasrin Syed Hussin, of Malaysia, drew on the example of previous Preparatory Committees and circulated his own succinct “Reflections of the Chair of the 2019 session of the Preparatory Committee” under his authority and responsibility, which can be considered as a minimum common denominator of the views of the Parties.

In past review cycles the Chairpersons of Preparatory Committees also resorted to circulating their own views on the result of the discussions. This practice has sometimes generated heated debate about the content and the status of such papers and suggests lack of a clearer understanding of the nature and purpose of the preparatory debates.

The Chair's "Reflections"

Most of the points contained in the Chair's “Reflections” would certainly enjoy general support, particularly the mention to the Parties’ conviction that the NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and that this conviction must be maintained and strengthened. The positive contributions of the Treaty to strategic stability are also highlighted, as well as the importance of balance between disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Chair's paper recognizes the need to reconcile differing views on the implementation of the disarmament pillar.

This is certainly the opinion of a large majority of the Parties. In the absence of a substantive document from the PrepCom, it is to be hoped that the constructive approach of the “Reflections” will guide the discussions and considerations at the Review Conference.

The 2019 III Preparatory Committee was able to achieve consensus on procedural recommendations, notably the appointment of Ambassador Rafael Mariano Grossi of Argentina as President of the X Review Conference. Ambassador Grossi announced his commitment to engage immediately in consultations with the Parties to the Treaty on the issues at hand.

The Committee also adopted the proposed agenda for the Conference, along with other organizational issues. In this way, the competent work carried out by the Chair and the Secretariat cleared the path toward what Parties hope will be a successful Review Conference in 2020.

The history of past Sessions of Preparatory Committees shows that underlying substantive divergences among different Parties sometimes resulted in vexing procedural difficulties. For example, the inability of the 2004 III Preparatory Committee to agree on the formulation of the agenda for the 2005 Review Conference was at the root of the failure of the latter.

The main divergence then centered on which Final Documents of previous Conferences should be taken into account in the Review in that year. After two weeks of sterile debate, the issue was finally solved through a footnote to the agenda, stating the obvious: delegations had the right to raise any question they deemed relevant to the review.

A similar difficulty to agree on a draft agenda was felt in 2007, but at that time a solution in the same lines as those of 2005 was found after a shorter period of wrangling. Since then, the preparatory cycles for the following two Review Conferences avoided falling into the same trap and found timely agreement on the required procedural recommendations. Difficulties of that sort should not hinder preparatory work in the future.

With regard to substance, however, there remains a sentiment of frustration among a sizeable group of Parties which point out that after 50 years the nuclear weapon States failed to adopt concrete nuclear disarmament measures under the Treaty. The perception of a lack of commitment to the implementation of its Article VI led to the proposal, negotiation and adoption in 2017 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons leading to their elimination (TPNW).

Supporters of this instrument are actively promoting its entry into force and hope that in due course it will become part of positive International Law. A more sensible attitude by those who have so far opposed it would be to at least acknowledge the existence and

relevance of the TPNW as a reinforcement of the non-proliferation commitments contained in the NPT, as well as a path to achieve nuclear disarmament, an objective TPNW deriders profess to seek.

The TPNW is not incompatible with the NPT; together with the Comprehensive Test-ban Treaty (CTBT) and the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones, it reinforces the commitment of its Parties to non-proliferation. It also highlights the enduring rejection of the overwhelming majority of the international community to the last and most horrific category of weapons of mass destruction not yet banned. These powerful reminders make it hard to understand the fierce resistance that proposals to ban nuclear weapons have always faced from their possessors.

### *Disquieting signs*

Several disquieting signs reveal a dangerous erosion of the structure of bilateral agreements between the major possessors of nuclear weapons. In multilateral forums on disarmament and non-proliferation no tangible progress has been achieved for over twenty years. Agreed norms in the field of arms control are being rejected and replaced by unilateral decisions. The credibility of the Chemical Weapons Convention verification system has been put into doubt. The standards set by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty – although not yet formally in force – have been challenged by hitherto unsubstantiated suspicions.

The major nuclear weapon States do not seem interested in engaging with each other in search of understandings that might lead to further progress in arms control and disarmament. It is feared that soon there will be no legally binding bilateral constraints on the two most armed States regarding the size and deployment of nuclear weapons. Competition and innovative technological applications under development in some nuclear weapon States to add new capabilities to their military forces amount to a dangerous resumption of the arms race.

The absence of progress on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East will again be a major hurdle at the forthcoming Review Conference. Observers tend to agree that prospects for a successful outcome in 2020 seem bleaker than at any time in the past.

A recent report by a group of eminent persons convened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations concluded that the stalemate over nuclear disarmament is not tenable and that it is not in the interest of any State to allow the foundation of the global

nuclear order to crumble. In fact, it warns, “the divide between opposing trends in disarmament has become so stark that States with divergent views have been unable to engage meaningfully with each other on key issues”.

There is understandable concern with recent proposals and attitudes that risk to procrastinate, rather than advance, the achievement of the objectives of the Treaty. At the III PrepCom it became clear that even the “step-by-step approach” promoted for decades is no longer seen by its proponents as capable of delivering results.

At this point it seems hard to see how a multilateral discussion by a select group of States on creating a favorable environment for nuclear disarmament can foster progress. In their time, unfavorable circumstances did not impede the conception, negotiation and adoption of the existing instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, including the NPT itself.

States Party to the NPT must look at the lessons of the past as well as mind the signs of the present. There is a clear and present danger of a further deterioration of the global collective peace and security architecture that might also affect the credibility and stability of the NPT. Compliance by all Parties with their obligations is essential in this regard.

It is relevant to underscore that, in his “Reflections”, the Chair of the III PrepCom notes that there remain many more points of convergence in the views of different States than there are divergences. No matter how deep and hard to reconcile these may be, States Party should heed the Chair’s advice for open, inclusive and transparent dialogue – not least civility and diplomacy – to prevail into the 2020 Review Conference and beyond.

All Parties to the NPT strongly wish to avoid two failed Review Conferences in a row and must cooperate in good faith in order to prevent the negative consequences of the diminishing confidence in and credibility of the structure of international agreements in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The alternative is simply not acceptable. [IDN-InDepthNews – 17 June 2019]

*\* Ambassador Sergio Duarte is President of Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs, and a former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. He was president of the 2005 Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference.*

## The Blame Game Obstructs the Path to NPT 50th Anniversary

*Viewpoint by Tariq Rauf \**



*Photo: Syed Hasrin Syed Hussin, Chair of the Third Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference, briefs press on the closing of the third and final session prior to the 2020 Review Conference. 10 May 2019. UN Headquarters, New York. Credit: UN Photo/Evan Schneider.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – In addition to discord and divisions over nuclear disarmament, between the five nuclear-weapon States (NWS) parties, along with their allies, and most of the non-nuclear-weapon States, a contentious issue concerns the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East (MEWMDZF).

At the 1995 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review and Extension Conference, the decision had to be taken on the future course of the Treaty. In order to get the support of the States of the Arab Group and of Iran, the three depositary States of the NPT – the Russian Federation (USSR), UK and the USA – co-sponsored a Resolution on the MEWMDZF that became an integral part of the inter-linked package that allowed for the indefinite extension of the NPT.

The 2000 NPT review conference called upon Israel by name to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and for the implementation of the 1995 resolution. The 2010 NPT review conference mandated a regional conference on the zone to be convened by 2012; however, the U.S. unilaterally postponed that conference leading to criticism by the Arab States, Iran, the Russian Federation and the Group of Non-Aligned States (NAM)

The 2015 NPT review conference collapsed into failure when the U.S. followed by Canada and the UK vetoed a proposal to hold such a conference by 2016 under the aegis of the UN Secretary-General.

In 2018, the General Assembly adopted a decision by vote mandating the UN Secretary-General to convene a MEWMDZF conference before the end of 2019. According to unconfirmed reports circulating at the PrepCom, it is alleged that some Western States

are working behind the scene to prevent the convening of such a conference, but it is known that some States remain opposed to the proposals advanced by the Arab States.

In general, led by the U.S., Western Group and EU States, have opposed putting pressure on Israel to attend such a conference leading to unhappiness and anger on the part of the Arab States, Iran and NAM. This issue once again stumped agreement at the 2019 NPT PrepCom. Even though now there are serious divisions between some members of the Arab Group, and also with Iran and Syria; nonetheless on the matter of the MEWMDFZ the group manages to coalesce behind a common position.

Given the precipitous decline in international relations over the past few years, not surprisingly there is growing fatigue and frustration in the inability and powerlessness of the majority of non-NWS to move on nuclear disarmament through the NPT review process.

Consequently, many diplomats and research institute experts are flailing around attacking the efficacy of the review process, while largely ignoring the corrosive effects of worsening political relations, hardened positions, lack of flexibility, decline in negotiating skills for compromise and growing ignorance of the sophistication of the strengthened review process.

NPT review conferences were never designed to be forums for either negotiating legally binding treaties or conventions on nuclear weapons, for nuclear verification measures for IAEA safeguards, or for battling over major international political controversies and resolving differences especially relating to ‘compliance’ with IAEA safeguards by non-NWS.

Since 2014 in particular, the NPT review process has been eroding and deteriorating with loss of civility and respect in discourse, lack of political will and competence to develop common ground in support of the NPT, retracting agreed steps and actions under the NPT review process, disregard of international law while touting the preservation of a so-called “rules based international order”, and blaming the review process for the inability of States parties to join hands to strengthen the integrity and authority of the NPT.

Just as the band playing on the deck of the Titanic could not prevent its sinking, diplomats are unable and unwilling to reverse the steady undermining of the NPT strengthened review process as they persist in defending entrenched positions, are unwilling to find common ground in the interest of preserving the NPT, and are failing to fully implement the relevant guidance from the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT review conferences.

In accordance with the mandate for the third and final session of the PrepCom to prepare a report containing recommendations to the review conference, the Chairman, Ambassador Syed Mohamad Haskin (of Malaysia), circulated his draft report to delegations on May 3. The draft recommendations which on the whole were relatively balanced and broadly reflected the views of States, inter alia, included:

Reaffirmation of the commitment to promote the full implementation of the provisions of the Treaty, as well as the reaffirmation of the previous commitments of the 1995 NPTREC, the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences;

Call on nuclear-weapon States to cease the development of new types of nuclear weapons, and refrain from qualitative improvements to existing nuclear weapons, and further minimize the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies;

Call for the entry into force as soon as possible of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and pending the entry into force of the need to maintain moratoria on nuclear test explosions;

Continue efforts towards the full implementation and the realisation of the objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and take into account the conference for the negotiation of a binding treaty on the creation of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction to be held in 2019;

Note the strong support for the continued implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the Iran deal); and

Urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

Given the prevailing deleterious international security situation and ongoing squabbling among States it was not a surprise that, on May 8 and 9, the Chair's draft report while perfunctorily praised was attacked from all sides for not adequately reflecting various idiosyncratic views of different States and many suggestions were made for "improving" the document.

As is usual practice, the Chair then circulated a revised draft on the evening of May 9, which in effect strengthened the text on nuclear disarmament, referred to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, and included a call on India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States.

On the last day, May 10, there was near bedlam as State after State mostly from the Western side criticized the revised draft as being unacceptable and these States then stated that they were prepared to work on the basis of the original draft which they now miraculously found either as a basis for moving forward or to be adopted unchanged!

On the other hand, many though not all NAM States praised the revised draft and indicated their willingness to accept it despite its shortcomings. The complaints related to the language on nuclear disarmament, the additional protocol to safeguards agreements, the JCPOA and Iran's compliance, non-compliance by Syria with the NPT regarding its undeclared construction of a nuclear reactor in 2007, the Middle East, nuclear security, North Korea denuclearization and other matters.

It is noteworthy that the Chair performed his duties with grace and humour and maintained the confidence of the PrepCom throughout, though on the last two days his luck ran out when several States expressed their criticisms of his draft recommendations as discussed in this report.

At 11:22 EST New York on May 10, the 2019 NPT PrepCom Chair announced that in the absence of consensus on both the original and revised draft recommendations, he would circulate them as "Recommendations by the Chair to the 2020 NPT Review Conference".

Yet again, NPT States abjectly failed to agree on Recommendations after harping for nearly two weeks on the importance of the NPT as the cornerstone of the global nuclear governance system and highlighting the significance of the 50th anniversary of the NPT in 2020. One astute participant was heard to mutter under his breath rather cruelly that the right and left brain hemispheres of some delegates were disconnected and they were suffering from acute disconnection syndrome! [IDN-InDepthNews – 21 May 2019]

*\* Tariq Rauf was Alternate Head of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) NPT Delegation 2002-2010, and has attended all NPT meetings as an official delegate since 1987 through 2019. Personal views are expressed here.*

## Fiddling While the Nuclear Arms Control Architecture Collapses

*Viewpoint by Tariq Rauf*



*Photo: Chair Syed Hasin addresses the 2019 NPT PrepCom. Credit: Alicia Sanders-Zakre, Arms Control Association.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The third and final session of the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) fizzled out in disagreements over the pace and extent of nuclear disarmament at United Nations headquarters in New York.

At the NPT PrepCom held from April 28 through May 10, 2019, representatives of 150 States parties took part in the discussions, 106 statements were made in the General Debate followed by scores of sometimes repetitive statements under three “clusters” of issues: (1) nuclear disarmament and security assurances; (2) nuclear verification (IAEA safeguards), nuclear weapon-free zones, regional issues including with respect to the Middle East, and North Korea and South Asia; and (3) peaceful uses of nuclear energy, NPT review process and provisions for withdrawal from the Treaty.

In 2020, the NPT will mark its 50 years in force since 1970 and 25 years since the Treaty was extended in 1995 to remain in force indefinitely, i.e. permanently.

The NPT with 191 States parties is widely considered to be the cornerstone of the global nuclear governance regime covering nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

It is considered to be a major success in halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and has contained their possession to nine States (USA, USSR/Russian Federation, UK, France, China, Israel, India, Pakistan and North Korea – in that chronological order) – though the last three States listed never signed the NPT and North Korea withdrew from the Treaty in 2003.

Many Western States are focusing on marking the Golden Jubilee of the NPT in 2020 through highlighting the widespread peaceful applications of nuclear energy such as, for example, in agriculture, electricity production, human health and salinity, and strengthening the nuclear verification capabilities of the International Atomic Energy Agency; while downplaying the failure to achieve the elimination of nuclear weapons.

On the other side, many non-nuclear-weapon States from Asia, Africa and Latin America are pointing out the promise of the NPT to end the age of nuclear weapons remains largely unfulfilled.

In general, at NPT meetings States set themselves up in political groupings, the largest of which is the Group of Non-Aligned States (NAM) numbering around 122; the Western and Others Group (WEOG) that includes Western countries (EU, NATO, Canada, USA) along with Australia, Japan, South Korea and New Zealand; and the Eastern Group that includes the Russian Federation, Belarus, Hungary, Poland and some other East European countries (even though some are in the EU and NATO).

In addition, there are issue-based groupings, such as: the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) with Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa; the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) with

Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates; the Vienna Group of Ten with Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden; the “de-alerting” (of nuclear weapons) group with Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sweden and Switzerland; the “P-5” nuclear-weapon States (China, France, Russian Federation, UK and USA); the Group of Arab States, among others.

Thus, there is a bewildering array of groupings of States each pushing their converging and diverging views and as a result making the achievement of consensus or agreement even more difficult.

The mandate of the Preparatory Committee is two-fold: (1) to complete the procedural preparations for the next review conference which include agreement on the dates of the next two sessions of the PrepCom, the rules of procedure, the agenda and programme of work, and endorsement of the President of the review conference; and (2) to make “recommendations” on issues pertaining to the “three pillars” of the Treaty – nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in addition to security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States and regional issues.

This year’s session of the PrepCom, like its predecessors, managed to complete the procedural preparations and endorsed in principle the candidacy of Ambassador Rafael Grossi (Permanent Representative of Argentina to the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations in Vienna) as President of the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

However, as in previous years, States parties were unable to overcome their deep differences and thus did not agree on any “recommendations” even though these are only indicative and not binding for the review conference.

Much ink was spilled on concerns and allegations regarding the current sorry state of international relations, political and military conflicts, decline of multilateralism in favour of unilateralism and pursuit of narrow national interests.

But just as the senators of Rome fiddled away while the city burned, today’s diplomats seem helpless in averting the total collapse of nuclear arms control thus paving the way for a dangerous new nuclear arms race with increased risks of accidental or deliberate use of nuclear weapons.

Nuclear weapons are at the core of debate. From the very first NPT review conference in 1975, and every five years thereafter, the main area of division and discord is nuclear disarmament as required under Article VI of the Treaty. The five nuclear-weapon States (NWS) parties, along with their allies, traditionally have linked disarmament to national and international security considerations, as well as to disarmament covering conventional and other types of weapons.

In contrast, in general, most of the non-nuclear-weapon States have emphasized the implementation of NPT Article VI. Over the years, the Western States have promoted a so-called “step-by-step approach”, or “building blocks” to achieve disarmament – i.e., the NPT to be followed by a Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, then a fissile material control treaty, and then other unspecified steps. In contrast, the NAM have been proposing a phased programme and a specified time frame for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons through a nuclear weapons convention.

The proponents of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) that was adopted by 122 States in July 2017 wisely opted not to make this treaty the centrepiece of their statements in the disarmament cluster thus disappointing the strident opponents who feared that the PrepCom would be “highjacked” by the TPNW.

A new element, however, was introduced by the U.S. at the 2018 NPT PrepCom in Geneva when it proposed “Creating the Conditions for Nuclear Disarmament” (CCND), sweeping aside previously agreed measures from the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT review conferences.

At this year’s PrepCom the U.S. reformulated its CCND proposal to “Creating the Environment for Nuclear Disarmament” (CEND) and based its new approach on the grounds that the “step-by-step” approach had failed to deliver results and thus a completely new track was needed to create the conditions and environment that could lead to further nuclear arms reductions involving all possessors of nuclear weapons.

The U.S.’ CEND approach has left its unquestioning loyal allies, who have doggedly supported the step-by-step or building blocks or “stepping stones” approaches, squirming in the cesspool of unilateralism and dreaming of butterflies and unicorns to appear magically and sprinkle fairy dust leading to a new vision and new world of uncharted nuclear arms control. [IDN- InDepthNews – 20 May 2019]

## Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Conference Could Hit a U.S. Roadblock

*By Shanta Roy*



*Photo: 2020 NPT Review Conference Chair Argentine Ambassador Rafael Grossi addressing the third PrepCom. IDN-INPS Collage of photos by Alicia Sanders-Zakre, Arms Control Association.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – The Trump Administration, which has been recklessly wielding a wrecking ball against multi-lateral treaties, will be put to a test next year when the 1970 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be up for review at the 2020 conference scheduled to take place in New York in April-May.

"We have a lot of work to do, especially since next year is the 50th anniversary of the NPT," Malaysian Ambassador Syed Mohamad Hasrin Aidid, who chaired the preparatory committee (PrepCoM) sessions, which concluded May 10, told the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on the sidelines of the Prep-Com.

The Trump administration's hardline position against multilateral treaties has been reflected in the U.S. withdrawal from three arms agreements so far: the 2015 multilateral nuclear agreement with Iran, the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty with Russia and the most recent un-signing of the 2013 international Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

The NPT Review Conference is held every five years since the treaty went into force in 1970. According to the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the 2005 and 2015 Review Conferences were unable to reach agreement on any substantive outcome documents.

Dr Rebecca Johnson, founder of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy and author of

"Unfinished Business", told IDN "while the PrepCom went better than expected, the real questions for 2020 are not about the review conference procedures but about the treaties under threat, mainly from the short-sightedness of Trump and his officials who prioritise narrow nationalistic wish lists above collective international security, and who prefer unilateral threats to international legal agreements."

In the run-up to 2020, she argued, "we need to bring into force the new UN Treaty that prohibits nuclear weapons use, production and deployment for everyone, and strengthen all aspects of the international security regimes that we need to protect humanity from nuclear and climate catastrophes that are looming over us."

Dr Johnson also pointed out that the recently-concluded NPT PrepCom was better than many had feared, thanks to the calm and effective chairing of Malaysia's Ambassador Hasrin.

"He managed to bypass various problems to adopt the main procedural issues, including agreement to

designate Argentina's Ambassador Rafael Grossi as president of next year's 2020 Review Conference.”

She added that it had surprised no-one that the Prep-Com ended without getting consensus agreement on issue-based recommendation – “in light of the deep divisions caused by the U.S. and Russia suspending the INF Treaty, the U.S. trying to wreck the JCPOA that was meant to constrain Iran's nuclear programme, as well as Syria, North Korea and other real world problems”

“A lot can happen in a year, negative and positive,” declared Dr Johnson, who also serves on the International Panel on Fissile Materials (IPFM) and International Steering Group (ISG) of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), following several years as ICAN Co-Chair and first President of ICAN Europe-Middle-East-Africa (EMEA).

“We have to use this year to put human security above narrow nationalist interests and reinforce local and global action to prevent the twin humanitarian disasters of climate destruction and nuclear war.”

The current U.S. aggressive stance is attributed to two senior hawkish America officials: Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and National Security Adviser John Bolton, who are also pushing for U.S. military action on Iran.

Dr Tarja Cronberg, Distinguished Associate Fellow, at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), told IDN the NPT is a treaty designed by the U.S. (and the Soviet Union) in the 1960's.

Although the treaty requires nuclear disarmament, it gives the right to five states to maintain nuclear weapons at the same time, as it prevents other states from accessing these weapons, she said.

As both the right to have nuclear weapons – and to prevent proliferation – are in the fundamental interest of the U.S., it is hard to imagine that the Trump administration would use “the wrecking ball” at the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

On the contrary, it is in the U.S. interests that the conference ends with a consensus document supporting the NPT, said Dr Cronberg.

Furthermore, opposed to other treaties the U.S. is withdrawing from, such as the Arms Trade Treaty and the INF-treaty – both of which limit U.S. freedom of action – the NPT treaty empowers the U.S., both to keep its own arms and at the same time provides a

platform to the U.S. to prevent others, especially Iran and North Korea from possessing nuclear weapons, she argued.

“In this very case the U.S. would be expected to, not to oppose the multilateral character of the NPT-treaty, but to support it.”

“The situation is, however, challenged by the JCPOA, a multilateral agreement preventing Iran from manufacturing nuclear weapons. If this agreement, supported by the remaining partners after the U.S. exit in 2018, collapses before the 2020 conference, this will undermine the NPT,” she added.

Furthermore, if as a result, Iran would leave the NPT (today not a likely alternative) this could challenge the very existence of the NPT. In this case the U.S. would indirectly be responsible for wrecking the NPT, she noted.

Dr Cronberg also said the 2019 Prep Com that just finished in New York brought the long-term frustration built into the NPT between those who want the disarmament pillar strengthened and those that see the NPT only as a non-proliferation treaty into the open.

“Empowered by the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the majority of the non-nuclear weapon states had a major influence on the chair's recommendations for the 2020 conference. Opposed by the nuclear weapon states, particularly the U.S. and its allies, this confirms the polarisation of the current nuclear order.”

Unless the nuclear weapon states succeed in agreeing on disarmament measures that could form a basis for a compromise at the NPT 2020, the conference will be as divided as the Prep Com, she predicted.

Nevertheless, as the Review Conference is the 50th birthday of the NPT, there will be strong pressure to achieve a final consensus document, however thin, praising the treaty for its achievements, Dr Cronberg declared.

Meanwhile, at a press briefing in Sochi, Russia on May 14, and in the presence of Pompeo, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said: “I hope that we'll be able to come up with specifics of ways how to get U.S.-Russian relations out of that regrettable state that they happen to be, due to several objective and subjective reasons involved, considering that this is the task, the instructions coming from our presidents

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

that was confirmed during the Helsinki summit, as well as in their conversation on the 3rd of May.”

He said both the US and Russia have multiple issues that require both urgent methods as well as long-term, sustainable solutions.

“That has to do with the situation in strategic stability sphere, as well as more efficient ways to tackle terrorism, as well as finding solutions to different clashes in different regions of the world.”

He added: “We see that there are certain suspicions and prejudice on both sides, but this is not a way for – have a win-win situation because that mistrust that we have hinders both your security and our security and causes concern around the world.”

“I believe that it is time to build new, more constructive and responsible metrics of our relationship, of our mutual perception, and we are prepared to do that if our U.S. colleagues and counterparts readily support that.”

“I believe that a requisite – an important requisite for success of our dialogue is to rebuild trust at all levels of our dialogue – in the highest level, at the working

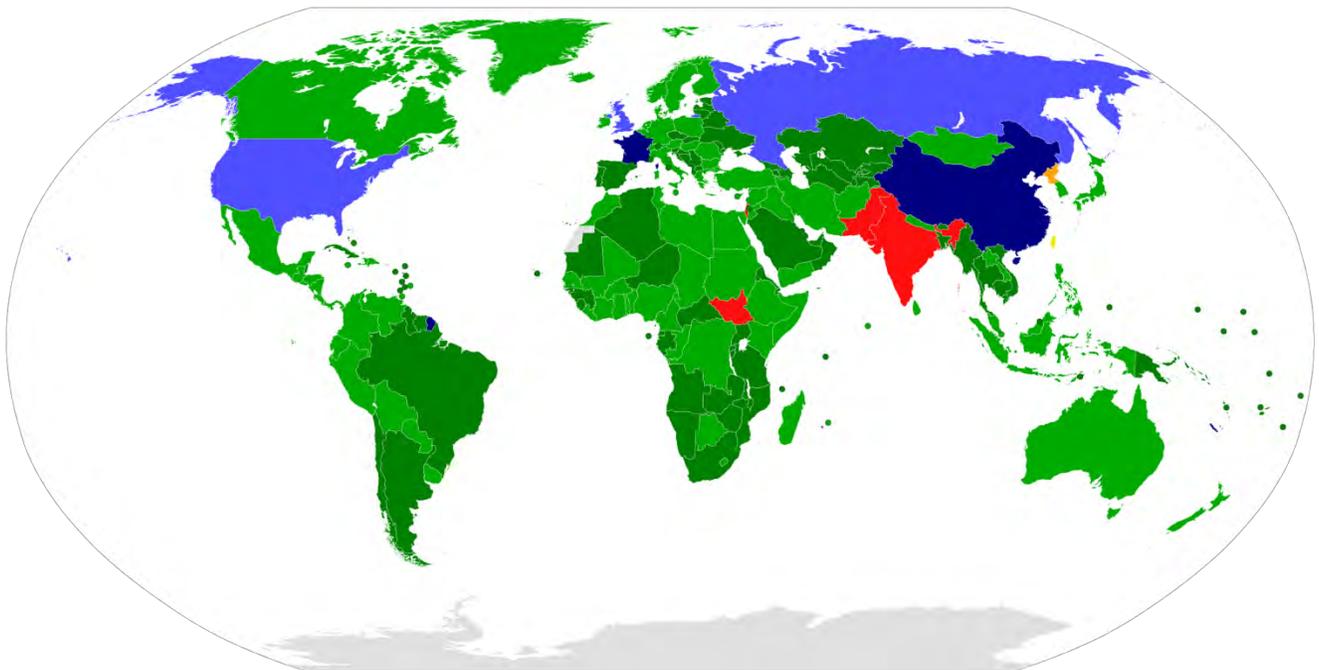
level, (inaudible). And considering that we have met over the past two weeks for two times, that’s a reason for some optimism.”

“Let’s try it and see what happens,” declared Lavrov.

According to the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs, the NPT is a landmark international treaty whose objective is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, to promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

The Treaty represents the only binding commitment in a multilateral treaty to the goal of disarmament by the nuclear-weapon States. Opened for signature in 1968, the Treaty entered into force in 1970.

On May 11, 1995, the Treaty was extended indefinitely. A total of 191 States have joined the Treaty, including the five nuclear-weapon States. More countries have ratified the NPT than any other arms limitation and disarmament agreement, a testament to the Treaty’s significance. [IDN-InDepthNews – 18 May 2019]



CC BY-SA 3.0

Participation in the [Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty](#). ■ Recognized nuclear weapon state ratifiers ■ Recognized nuclear weapon state acceders ■ Other ratifiers ■ Other acceders or succeeders ■ Withdrawn ■ Non-signatory ■ Unrecognized state, abiding by acceders

## UN Eager to Advance Commitment to Nuclear Non-Proliferation

*By Jamshed Baruah*



*Photo: German Foreign Affairs Minister Heiko Maas chairs the Security Council meeting on Non-proliferation and supporting the Non-proliferation Treaty ahead of the 2020 Review Conference. 02 April 2019. United Nations, New York. Photo # 802676. UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – Deeply concerned about the erosion of the disarmament and arms control framework that reaped significant post-cold-war-era gains, the United Nations is keen to ensure the continued viability of the landmark Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

With an eye on the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty’s entry into force and the twenty-fifth celebration of its indefinite extension, the 15-nation Security Council – chaired by Germany’s Foreign Affairs Minister Heiko Maas – convened a high-level meeting at the UN Headquarters on April 2, 2019.

According to the Council President for the month of April, Christoph Heusgen, Germany’s permanent representative, the members of the Security Council – charged with ensuring international peace and security – reaffirmed their commitment to advance the goals of the NPT as the “cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy”.

They concurred that the 2020 NPT Review Conference provided an opportunity for the NPT States parties to “unambiguously reaffirm” their commitment to the Treaty, to commemorate its historic achievements and, by further advancing its goals, strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. They expressed their “readiness to work together and join efforts to achieve a successful outcome at the 2020 NPT Review Conference.”.

A close look at discussions in the Council reveals that a “successful outcome” of deliberations in 2020 is far from certain. “The NPT has proven remarkably durable. However, that durability should not be taken for granted,” at a time when the acquisition of arms is prioritized over the pursuit of diplomacy, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, told the Security Council in all frankness.

“The disarmament success of the post-cold war era has come to a halt,” she said, and the security landscape is being replaced with dangerous rhetoric about the utility of nuclear weapons and an increased reliance on these weapons in security doctrines. “The prospect of the use of nuclear weapons is higher than it has been in generations,” warned Nakamitsu.

However, she added that whatever new arms control and disarmament approaches in the twenty-first century might look like, one thing is clear: the NPT will still be at the centre of our collective security mechanism and it will have to stay “fit for purpose” across its three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The 2020 Review Conference is a “golden opportunity” to make headway on all of these goals, and to make sure this linchpin of international security remains fit for purpose through the next 25 or even 50 years.

Calling a spade a spade, Germany’s Foreign Affairs Minister Heiko Maas said in the ensuing discussion that, “for all the successes we have achieved in recent decades, we mustn’t fool ourselves”. He pointed out that dismantling nuclear arsenals has come to a standstill and prospects of actual nuclear “re-armament” have been raised by the impending loss of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty.

The 1987 Treaty required the United States and the Soviet Union (now Russian Federation) to eliminate and permanently forswear all of their nuclear and conventional ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges of 500 to 5,500 kilometres. The Treaty marked the first time the superpowers had agreed to reduce their nuclear arsenals, eliminate an entire category of nuclear weapons, and utilize extensive on-site inspections for verification.

While the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is not a party to the NPT, it is entrusted with key verification responsibilities deriving from the Treaty. Presenting a glimpse of achievements, IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said non-proliferation safeguards are being implemented in 182 countries, including 179 which are States parties to the NPT. However, key challenges include a steady increase in the amount of nuclear material and the number of nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, coupled with continuing pressure on the Agency’s regular budget.

Topping its agenda are the nuclear programmes of Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Iran continues to fully implement its commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and it must continue to do so, said Amano. Meanwhile, the Agency continues to monitor the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s nuclear programme and evaluate all safeguards-relevant information available to it. The IAEA could respond within weeks to any request to send inspectors back to Pyongyang.

In a broader sense, the Agency helps to improve the health and prosperity of millions of people by making nuclear science and technology available across many sectors, Amano continued. Nuclear power can also help address the twin challenges of ensuring reliable energy supplies and curbing greenhouse-gas emissions. “Helping countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, using relevant nuclear technology, is an important part of our work,” Amano added.

In the ensuing discussion, non-permanent Council members such as Côte d’Ivoire and the Dominican Republic reported benefits reaped from nuclear technologies. Others highlighted concerns, from terrorists acquiring atomic bombs to the disarmament machinery’s languishing impasse that continues to hobble negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty and delay the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Some members spotlighted a crumbling security landscape exacerbated by concerns such as the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s nuclear programme and the suspension of disarmament agreements.

Russia’s permanent representative to the UN, Vassily A. Nebenzia, said that attempts are being made to undermine universally recognized norms which have worsened an already complicated situation. The 2020 Review Conference should not be used to settle political scores, he said.

While Russia has reduced its nuclear arsenal by more than 85 per cent, his Government remains greatly concerned about global security, given the unfettered deployment of United States anti-missile systems, its placement of military weapons in outer space and its attempts to decrease the defence capabilities of other countries through unilateral sanctions. This hardly creates an environment favourable to reducing the nuclear weapons stockpile, he said.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

Andrea Lee Thompson, the U.S. Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs, said reaching a consensus at the 2020 Review Conference is possible if parties avoid using divisions to hold the review process hostage. “We cannot overlook the fact that the actions of those who are expanding their nuclear stockpiles have contributed to a deterioration of the global security environment,” she said, adding that the United States will seek a positive outcome from the 2020 review process.

China’s permanent representative to the UN, Ma Zhaoxu, said the NPT review process has reached a critical state. Unilateralism and double standards in non-proliferation continue to exist. The international community must uphold the concept of a shared future, strengthen unity and cooperation, and steer the 2020 review process towards a unified outcome. He urged Russia and United States to return to talks on their relevant weapons agreements. The international community must continue to support and uphold multilateralism.

The Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France, Jean-Yves Le Drian, said that given tensions and growing energy needs worldwide, preserving the NPT is more central than ever before. To do so, Kuwait’s Deputy Prime Minister Abah Khalid Al Hamad Al Sabah said, multilateralism and the principles of the United Nations Charter remain essential tools.

Many members underlined the need to maintain the strategic balance between the NPT’s three pillars of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in ways that seek to maximize their benefits for all States parties.

Poland’s Foreign Affairs Minister Jacek Czaputowicz regretted that of the three pillars disarmament has produced the least results, adding that efforts remain a “work in progress, at best”. To change that, delegates from non-nuclear-weapon States said the instrument is complemented by the legally binding NPT.

Representatives of Indonesia and South Africa made an impassioned plea also for facilitating the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in July 2017.

Indonesia’s Foreign Affairs Minister Retno Lestari Priansari Marsudi said the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee to avoid a global catastrophe. Expressing strong support for all three pillars – disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy – she raised concerns that the disarmament provision is the least implemented. When non-nuclear-weapon States give up their rights to such weapons, possessor States must disarm their arsenals.

“With great powers, come great responsibilities,” she said, urging nuclear-weapon States to set a positive example. In 2020, parties must make every effort, including political will and flexibility, to avoid a repeat of the failure to produce an outcome at the 2015 Review Conference.

Also, the entry into force of the TPNW will help advance the aim of totally eliminating atomic bombs, as enshrined in Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. “The human species’ survival is dependent on our collective courage to eliminate nuclear weapons once and for all,” she said.

South Africa’s permanent representative to the UN, Jerry Matthews Matjila, said that his Government remains disheartened at the apparent lack of urgency and seriousness with which nuclear disarmament has been approached in the Non-Proliferation Treaty context.

“This state of affairs places the Treaty, as well as its review process, under increasing pressure and falls far short of expectations,” he said. Measurable progress – particularly on nuclear disarmament – must therefore be a major determinant in achieving and in sustaining international peace and security.

Matjila said, South Africa had clearly demonstrated its commitment towards nuclear disarmament when it deposited its instrument of ratification on the TPNW on February 25, 2019, joining 21 other States that have ratified the instrument. He encouraged States that have not yet done so to follow suit.

South Africa remains a shining example of a country that went from developing its own nuclear arsenal to dismantling it and being an outspoken advocate against these weapons of mass destruction. [IDN-InDepthNews – 23 April 2019]

## New Attempt to Tackle Nuclear Proliferation Threat in the Middle East

*By Santo D. Banerjee*



*Photo: Nuclear disarmament in the Middle East. Credit: USA Air Force.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – A conference on the establishment of a Weapons of Mass Destruction-Free Zone (WMDFZ) and a Nuclear Weapons-Free Zone (NWFZ) in the Middle East appeared to have been consigned to oblivion until the First Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) decided in December 2018 "to entrust to the Secretary-General the convening" of an international meeting to address the risk of nuclear proliferation in one of the world's most volatile regions.

The importance of the First Committee resolution lies in the fact that as part of a package of decisions that resulted in the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the 1995 NPT Review Conference called for "the establishment of an effectively verifiable Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear, chemical and biological, and their delivery systems."

First tabled by Egypt in 1990, the WMDFZ proposal expanded on longstanding calls to establish a NWFZ in the Middle East. Both measures, intended to be pursued in parallel, have gathered broad international support but practical progress has since been elusive.

On December 22, 2018 the First Committee voted a revised draft by Algeria, Baain, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt (on behalf of the League of Arab States that are UN members), Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Yemen and the State of Palestine.

The First Committee – also known as the Disarmament and International Security Committee or DISEC – asked the UN Secretary-General to convene annual sessions of the conference for a duration of one week at UN Headquarters "until the conference concludes the elaboration of a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction". The Secretary-General is further asked to report annually to the General Assembly on developments in this regard.

Israel, Micronesia and the United States voted against the resolution and 71 countries abstained.

Against this backdrop, it remains to be seen whether the Middle East WMDFZ and NWFZ turns out to be achievable or a sheer phantasmagoria.

Among pre-conditions for convening the conference are: whether it shall take as its terms of reference the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review Conference; and whether it shall aim at elaborating a legally

binding treaty establishing a WMDFZ and NWFZ in the Middle East, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region; and whether all decisions emanating from the conference shall be taken by consensus by the States of the region.

The conference is furthermore required to affirm the special responsibility of the three co-sponsors (USA, Russia, UK) of the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Conference – as the depository States of the NPT, and call upon them to fulfil their relevant obligations in accordance with the agreed outcomes of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences.

The First Committee resolution also calls for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Implementation Support Unit to prepare the background documents necessary for the conference.

Briefing the Security Council on April 2, 2019, IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano said that in 2012, the Agency provided background documentation to the facilitator for the United Nations Conference on the establishment of a Middle East WMDFZ and NWFZ a Middle East zone. It described the work undertaken by the IAEA and the experience gained concerning modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East.

"If requested by Member States, the IAEA can play a role in nuclear disarmament by sharing its experience in the implementation of verification," Amano added.

The Russian Foreign Ministry described the UNGA First Committee decision as "logical, well-balanced" and one that "meets the interests of all Middle East countries". It stressed the importance of its going in line with the earlier reached agreements to this respect – openness and voluntariness of participation in the conference of the region's states; understanding that any agreements on the issue can be achieved through a free dialogue between the countries of the Middle East and only on the basis of consensus; absence of artificial time frames.

As a new report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) points out, international efforts to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons go back over four decades. With the so-called Middle East resolution of 1995, such efforts – and the broader goal of establishing a WMD-free zone in the region – became part of the 1968 NPT review process.

The key question that has long divided states over the proposed WMD-free zone is whether it should be viewed as a means to a more stable and secure Middle East or result from an improved regional security environment, says Tytti Erästö, author of the report published in January 2019.

While the author sees no easy way to reconcile the challenges linked to the sequencing of the talks, it seems clear that any future attempts to promote a Middle East WMD-free zone must incorporate both perspectives. Though neither of the approaches is likely to prevent discord over the Middle East resolution at the 2020 NPT Review Conference, both have the potential to promote regional arms control and disarmament objectives, and thus strengthen the NPT in the long term, notes the report.

The first approach – launching the WMD-free zone process without the region's only nuclear weapon state – would be relatively easy to implement, argues the report. "Provided that other Middle Eastern states were ready to take the leap of faith required to initiate a constructive arms control dialogue, or even to strengthen their own arms control commitments, without waiting for reciprocal steps from Israel, they could make significant progress among themselves in setting the stage for a WMD-free zone."

According to Erästö, such an approach has received new political momentum in the wake of the UNGA First Committee calling for the conference on the Middle East WMD-free zone to be held under the auspices of the UN. "The plan could prove successful if the level of normative ambition by the Arab states and Iran is sufficient to sustain the process."

Support for the plan by all three depository states might also increase the chances of Israeli participation, and function as a safety valve for the tensions over the unimplemented Middle East resolution in the context of the NPT.

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

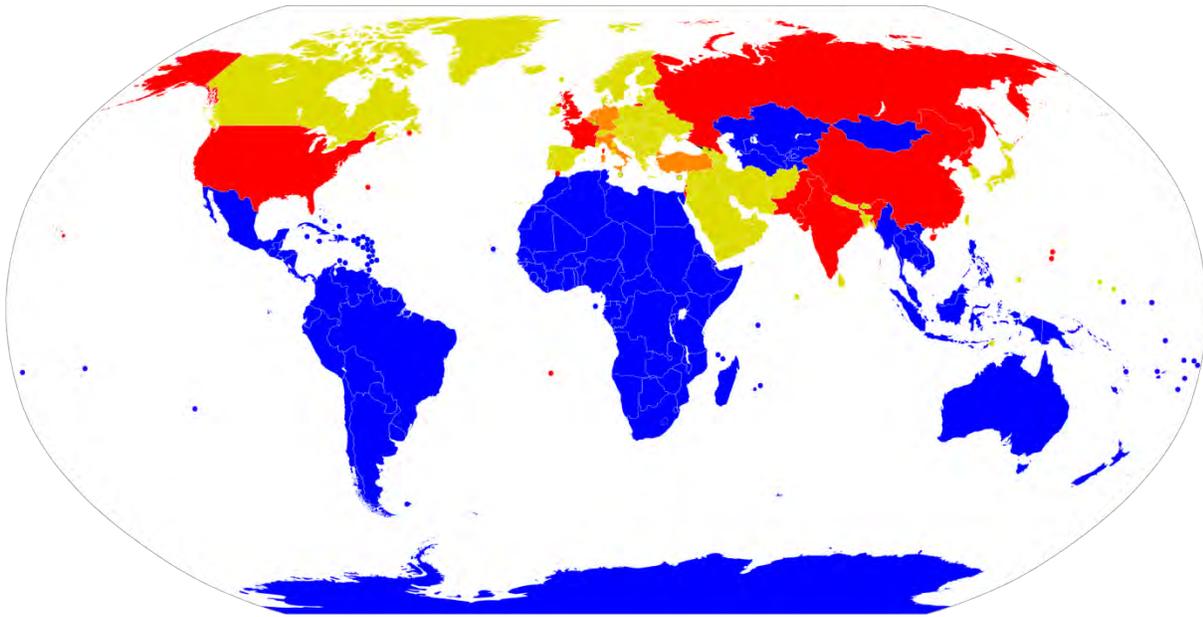
---

As Kelsey Davenport, Director for Non-Proliferation Policy at the Arms Control Association notes, an impediment to a WMDFZ and NWFZ proving achievable lies in the fact that despite extensive international support and the catalogue of resolutions endorsed including by all regional states, practical progress has been stymied by sharp disagreements between countries in the region over the terms and the sequence of steps leading to the establishment of the zone.

Reflecting differing perceptions of threat and security concerns existing in the region, Israel has closely linked discussions on the establishment of the WMDFZ with the existence of durable peace and compliance with international obligations by states in the region. Arab states have said that no such linkage should exist and that the establishment of WMDFZ would contribute to peaceful relations.

Besides, a future WMDFZ would commit parties not to possess, acquire, test, manufacture or use any nuclear, chemical and biological weapons as well as their delivery systems as provided for in the 1995 NPT Review Conference Middle East resolution.

Definitions for what constitutes these types of non-conventional weapons are contained in international treaties on nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as the 1948 United Nations Commission for Conventional Armaments. A shared understanding would also be required to regulate the types of delivery systems that would become subject to the prohibitions under the zone. [IDN-InDepthNews – 22 April 2019]



CC BY-SA 3.0

Map of the world with different kinds of nuclear proliferation and nuclear-weapon-free zones as defined by [United Nations Resolution 3472 from 1975](#). Note that only states as a whole are represented, not separate territorial parts of them even if they would belong to a different group. Please do not add unilaterally declared national or subnational zones with no international treaty, until we have a thorough survey of these. ■ [Nuclear-weapon-free zones](#) by international treaty, including territories that belong to a Nuclear Weapons State that has agreed the territory is subject to a zone ■ [Nuclear weapons states](#) and territories belonging to them that are not in any NWFZ ■ [Nuclear sharing](#) ([US nuclear arsenal](#) stationed there for host country use in wartime) ■ None of the above (but party to the [Non Proliferation Treaty \(NPT\)](#))

## Eminent Buddhist Leader Urges Halt to Nuclear Weapons and Killer Robots

*By Ramesh Jaura*



*Photo: Dr. Daisaku Ikeda. Credit: Seikyo Shimbun*

BERLIN | TOKYO (IDN) – In the run-up to the forthcoming round of crucial talks on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, Buddhist philosopher, educator and a staunch advocate of nuclear disarmament, Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, has called for easing tensions to halt further escalation of the conflict over nuclear weapons development.

Underlining the importance of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) from April 29 to May 10, 2019 at UN Headquarters in New York, Dr. Ikeda has urged the need to gather the support of States parties for multilateral efforts toward nuclear disarmament. 2020 will mark the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the accord.

In a wide-ranging interview with International Press Syndicate's flagship agency IDN, he also expressed the 'strong' hope that the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), adopted by 122 states on July 7, 2017 will enter into force by August 2020, the

75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Dr. Ikeda is President of the Tokyo-based Soka Gakkai International (SGI), the world's largest Buddhist lay organization with approximately 12 million practitioners in 192 countries and territories. He has submitted 19 Peace Proposals to the UN since the beginning of the 21st century.

Following is the complete text of the E-Mail interview with Dr. Ikeda:

**Question:** What would you like us to regard as the central message of your 2019 peace proposal, "Toward a New Era of Peace and Disarmament: A People-Centered Approach," to the upcoming PrepCom for the 2020 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Review Conference?

**Answer:** The 2020 NPT Review Conference will mark the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT. The world is standing at a crucial crossroads between

returning to an intense nuclear arms race and reducing tensions in order to realize nuclear disarmament.

Of particular concern is the fact that the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, once a symbol of the end of the Cold War, is on the brink of termination. Both the United States and Russia have announced suspension of their compliance with the Treaty, which will terminate in August if the confrontation between them remains unresolved.

Prospects for the United States and Russia agreeing to extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START), due to expire in February 2021, are also uncertain. The world is facing the growing possibility of losing the framework for nuclear disarmament.

During the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva held in February, UN Secretary-General António Guterres expressed his concern: “We simply cannot afford to return to the unrestrained nuclear competition of the darkest days of the Cold War.” I wholeheartedly agree with him.

**Question:** What do you think the NPT PrepCom should explore in order to prevent such a turn of events?

**Answer:** It is urgent that the upcoming session explore ways to ease tensions to stop further escalation of the conflict over nuclear weapons development. Measures to increase momentum for nuclear disarmament should also be discussed.

In our dialogue, “Moral Lessons of the Twentieth Century,” Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, who played an instrumental role in realizing the INF Treaty in 1987, described the global situation at the time: “We had to discover how to ensure our own security and lift the threat of nuclear self-destruction.” This, coupled with U.S. President Ronald Reagan’s belief that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought,” enabled both countries to embark on nuclear disarmament.

Looking back, the same vision was already in place at the inception of the NPT. The preamble highlights the need to make every effort to avert the danger of a nuclear war, and Article 6 stipulates the obligation to pursue good faith negotiations toward nuclear disarmament.

As I stressed in my peace proposal this year, it is essential that the spirit of the NPT be reaffirmed if we are to break through the persistent impasse of the nuclear problem.

In a statement made at the April 2018 PrepCom for the 2020 NPT Review Conference, the Nordic countries urged states to focus on what united them, saying: “We have to join forces to maintain and strengthen the relevance of the [NPT] and refrain from any action which may undermine it.” I think that commitment to the obligation stipulated in Article 6 of the NPT is what binds the global community together in this regard.

As the bilateral framework for nuclear disarmament is on the verge of collapse, there is an urgent need to return to the original spirit of the NPT and bring together the voices of the States parties to call for multilateral efforts toward nuclear disarmament. To achieve this, constructive discussions must take place with sufficient attention given to “the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons,” the shared concern expressed in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

The UN Disarmament Agenda presented by Secretary-General Guterres in May 2018 set forth a new perspective for the resolution of the nuclear problem—“disarmament to save humanity.” I urge states to share this vision at the 2020 Review Conference and strive to build a foundation for launching multinational negotiations for nuclear disarmament based on Article 6 of the NPT.

**Question:** What do you think would help the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) to come into force as soon as possible?

**Answer:** The TPNW has so far been signed by 70 states and ratified by 23 states since it was adopted at the UN in July 2017.

Even though it has long been said that it is impossible to prohibit nuclear weapons, powerful support from civil society, including the world’s hibakusha (victims of nuclear weapons) and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), of which the SGI is an international partner, made the establishment of the Treaty possible. The number of States parties is steadily growing.

The entry into force of the TPNW requires the ratification of 50 countries. I strongly hope that this will be achieved by August 2020, the 75th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. How nuclear-dependent states act will be key to whether the TPNW can enter into force at an early date, and, with a further significant increase in the number of States parties, become a universal treaty.

To encourage nuclear-weapon states to change their policies, it will be essential that nuclear-dependent states demonstrate a solid will in calling for a world without nuclear weapons. From this standpoint, I suggested in my peace proposal this year the creation of a group of like-minded states, Friends of the TPNW, and urged Japan—as the only country to have suffered a nuclear attack in wartime—to participate in this group and support the Treaty.

According to Norwegian People's Aid, a partner of ICAN, 155 states already adhere to the prohibitions against developing, testing, producing, manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, stockpiling, transferring, receiving the transfer of, using, threatening to use, allowing any stationing, installation or deployment of any nuclear weapons and assisting or receiving any assistance to engage in any activity prohibited under the Treaty. In other words, nearly 80 percent of the states of the world, including many that have not yet ratified the TPNW, have implemented security policies conforming to the prohibitions it sets forth.

If, in addition to these countries, nuclear-dependent states began working to overcome obstacles preventing them from joining the Treaty, the momentum toward a world without nuclear weapons would become truly solid. Moreover, if Friends of the TPNW could further deepen recent discussions within the international community concerning the threat and humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, this would be greatly helpful in spanning the chasm between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states. I believe that Japan should take the initiative and serve as a bridge in these efforts.

**Question:** What do you think should be the focus of discussions to resolve differences of opinion over the TPNW? In particular, what would you like Japan to undertake to enable the process to move faster?

**Answer:** The Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, established by Japan in 2017, had its fourth meeting in Kyoto in March. The experts from nuclear-weapon, nuclear-dependent and non-nuclear-weapon states who participated in discussions at this meeting raised a new issue. Namely, changes in the security environment engendered by the development of cyber technology and precision weapons are affecting the relevance of the notion of nuclear deterrence. Some participants pointed out that awareness of these changes could create common ground for discussion between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states.

The Japan NGO Network for Nuclear Weapons Abolition, in which the Soka Gakkai Peace Committee participates, offered the following recommendations from Japanese civil society to the fourth meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons (EPG): “The expansion of the international norm of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons, and the creation of the TPNW within this context, are historic achievements. The EPG must clearly make note and place these achievements as the factual basis for interstate dialogue.”

The role Japan can play in nuclear disarmament is also drawing attention from the world of faith. In this sense, it is significant that His Holiness Pope Francis plans to visit the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in November.

The SGI would like to continue working with other NGOs and faith-based organizations to broaden global solidarity in support of the TPNW in order to achieve its entry into force in 2020, marking humanity's departure from the nuclear age, 75 years after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

**Question:** While nuclear weapons are being modernized, lethal autonomous weapons systems (LAWS) are beginning to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. What do you think can be done?

**Answer:** LAWS, also called Artificial Intelligence (AI) weapons or robot weapons, are under development in several countries but have not yet been deployed.

An international framework must be created to ban their development or deployment before any atrocity takes place. I have been warning of the threat they present from a humanitarian and ethical perspective because these weapons, when given a command to attack, automatically go on killing with no hesitation or pangs of conscience.

The Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, a civil society coalition of which the SGI became a member in 2018, is working to ban the development and use of LAWS. Concern over the security and militaristic consequences of these weapons is growing in the international community. If any country were to deploy them for military use, the impact would be equivalent to that of the advent of nuclear weapons and radically transform the global security environment.

The UN Disarmament Agenda warns against the threat posed by LAWS, as the incorporation of AI may cause such weapons to perform “unanticipated or unexplainable actions.” Despite widespread concern,

different countries have varying views over an international ban on these weapons. Although the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (GGE LAWS) has been working under the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) since 2017, its fourth meeting held in March in Geneva was unable to make any concrete progress because of wide gaps in opinion.

However, states and civil society presented important perspectives at this meeting, which could serve as the groundwork for further discussions. For example, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) emphasized: “Human control at all three stages, in design (development stage) and in use (activation and operation stages), is essential for compliance with IHL [International Humanitarian Law].”

Human Rights Watch pointed out that while existing IHL establishes fundamental rules regarding civilian protection, accountability and ethical considerations, “it was not designed for situations in which life-and-death decisions were delegated to machines.”

Most states seemed to agree on the crucial importance of “ensuring appropriate levels of human judgment in decisions to use force” despite their differing views on prohibition. It should also be noted that Japan, which has repeatedly stated it has no plan to develop LAWS, highlighted the concerns of civil society regarding these weapons.

On the other hand, states reluctant to prohibit LAWS argued that technological advances in precision targeting would reduce civilian casualties in the event of use of such weapons. I cannot help but perceive the same kind of mentality in their argument as that which seeks to develop “clean” and “smart” nuclear weapons. The fundamental premise must be that assuming a distinction between “good” LAWS and “bad” LAWS will have serious consequences in the light of the spirit of International Humanitarian Law.

In its Statement to the Convention on Conventional Weapons Group of Governmental Experts, the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots calls for a legally binding instrument to prohibit fully autonomous weapons from the standpoints of international humanitarian and human rights law and in terms of moral and ethical objections raised over these weapons. It also stresses, to prevent an arms race, the need to stop development before it goes too far.

**Question:** Specifically, what do you see as the most dangerous aspect of LAWS?

**Answer:** As I stated in my peace proposal, LAWS would create not only a physical disconnect – the situation in which those who direct attacks and those who are targeted are not in the same place, as already seen in the case of drone strikes – but also an ethical disconnect, completely isolating the initiator of the attack from the actual combat operation.

This blatantly goes against human dignity and the right to life, principles established in the international community that are rooted in the lessons of two world wars and numerous tragedies of the last century. I cannot emphasize enough that we must not overlook the ethical disconnect inherent in LAWS.

If LAWS were to be used in actual combat, would there be any room for deep remorse over one’s actions, which must be felt by many of those who have engaged in combat, a poignant sense of powerlessness in the face of war or a personal resolution to dedicate oneself to peace for the sake of future generations?

In a world of AI-controlled weapons systems, there would be no chance of the complicated feelings that cross the lines of friend and foe arising, nor the weight of humanity bearing down... Would it then be possible to hold off, even for a moment, the decision to attack?

Fully autonomous robotic weapons would lower the threshold for military action. This could not only inflict catastrophic damage but also drastically limit possibilities for post-conflict reconciliation between former enemies. While they would be different in nature from nuclear weapons, any use of fully autonomous weapons would have irreversible consequences for both the country using them and the country they are used against.

Therefore, I strongly urge all parties to come together to work for the early adoption of a legally binding instrument comprehensively prohibiting the development and use of LAWS. Some argue that it is not easy to create a framework to ban weapons that are still in the development stage and yet to be deployed. But there is a precedent – blinding laser weapons were prohibited by a CCW protocol prior to deployment.

With keen awareness of the true nature of fully automated weapons, the SGI would like to continue working tenaciously to build international opinion calling for the prohibition of the development and use of LAWS. [IDN-InDepthNews – 19 April 2019]

## South Africa a Shining Example of Dismantling Nuclear Arsenal

*By J Nastranis*



*Photo: South African nuclear weapon. Credit: The National Interest.*

NEW YORK (IDN) – As the nuclear weapons and fossil fuel divestment campaigns gather steam, their political impact could be as powerful as the divestment campaign against South Africa in the late 20th Century, which was a critical factor in moving the South African government to end apartheid in 1994, anticipates Thies Kätow, researcher for the World Future Council.

There are hardly any signs that such an expectation will be realized and the campaign under way would persuade heavily armed nuclear states to disarm. Yet South Africa remains a shining example of a country that went from developing its own nuclear arsenal to dismantling it and being an outspoken advocate against these weapons of mass destruction.

The Central Asian republic of Kazakhstan also dismantled and destroyed nuclear weapons systems and facilities – but these were inherited Soviet Union when it collapsed.

South Africa reaffirmed its commitment 25 years after scrapping its nuclear program when it took another vital step towards a nuclear-weapons-free-world by ratifying on February 25, 2019 the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) at the UN Headquarters in New York. South Africa had signed the TPNW on September 20, 2017

Uranium-rich apartheid South Africa was interested as early as 1948 in atomic energy, and the mining, trade and energy industry that could be built around it. The government bought its first reactor from the U.S. in 1957.

The apartheid government developed a three-stage deterrence strategy in 1978, fearing a direct invasion

or an invasion of South African-controlled Namibia by Soviet-backed forces.

However, as the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) points out, the departure of Cuban forces from Angola, Namibia's independence, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union enabled South Africa to abandon its nuclear weapons program in 1989. Isolated from the global economy, the government also recognized that South Africa would benefit more from giving up its nuclear weapons program than maintaining it.

Following the dismantlement of South Africa's nuclear weapons, the national 1993 Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction Act committed South Africa to abstain from developing nuclear weapons.

While officially the purpose of the nuclear explosion program did not change from peaceful to military purposes until 1977, U.S. intelligence reports show that South Africa formally began its nuclear weapons program in 1973.

Initially, heavy international pressure kept them from testing these weapons. But by 1982, South Africa had developed and built its first nuclear explosive device. By 1989, South Africa had 6 bombs, each containing 55kg of HEU (highly enriched uranium), capable of

## TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT NUCLEAR WEAPONS

---

delivering an explosive equivalent of 19 kilotons of TNT.

In 1989, the government officially ended the nuclear program, and South Africa joined the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear-weapon state in 1991. By 1994, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) confirmed that all of South Africa's nuclear weapons had been dismantled.

South Africa has been champion a world without nuclear weapons ever since. On April 11, 1996, the country joined other African nations to sign the Treaty of Pelindaba to create a Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone on the African continent.

The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCON) – established for the purpose of ensuring States Parties' compliance with their undertakings in the Treaty – is based in Pretoria. On September 24, 1996 South Africa signed the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and ratified it in 1999.

Besides, South Africa is member of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC) in support of a nuclear weapons free world. The origin of the NAC goes back to June 1998 when the foreign ministers of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Slovenia, South Africa, and Sweden issued a statement calling for a new nuclear disarmament agenda. (Slovenia later withdrew from the NAC.)

The NAC called for the five nuclear weapon states – USA, Russia, Britain, France, China – and the three nuclear-capable states (India, Pakistan and North Korea) to make an unequivocal commitment to nuclear disarmament and to begin multilateral negotiations that would lead to the elimination of nuclear weapons through a Nuclear Weapons Convention. Besides, as one of the most vocal state advocates of nuclear disarmament, South Africa supports proposals to create a new legally binding

framework containing clear benchmarks and timelines to achieve and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons.

South Africa has continued to stand firmly behind the principle of nuclear disarmament, and became part of a core group of countries pushing the humanitarian initiative to end nuclear weapons since 2012. That initiative grew into a movement for a UN treaty banning nuclear weapons, which led to the adoption of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on July 7, 2017.

South Africa was a leader in encouraging negotiations on a UN- proposed nuclear weapons ban treaty at the 71st session of the UN General Assembly.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that the 2017 Nobel Peace laureate International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) has welcomed South Africa's "continued leadership on nuclear disarmament and hopes its action will inspire other African nations to adhere to the Treaty".

ICAN recalls President Nelson Mandela's 1998 address to the UN General Assembly which illustrated the ways in which South Africa challenged the arguments of deterrence used by other nuclear-armed nations:

"We must ask the question, which might sound naive to those who have elaborated sophisticated arguments to justify their refusal to eliminate these terrible and terrifying weapons of mass destruction – why do they need them anyway!

"In reality, no rational answer can be advanced to explain in a satisfactory manner what, in the end, is the consequence of Cold War inertia and an attachment to the use of the threat of brute force, to assert the primacy of some States over others." [IDN-InDepthNews – 13 April 2019]



*Koeberg Nuclear Power Station, Wikimedia Commons*



*Visit*



Flagship Agency of the Non-profit International Press Syndicate

*<https://www.indepthnews.net/>*