



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH JUNE 2011 ARTICLES

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Articles

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U.N. Agency Slams Nuclear Rogue Nations

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Singling out the countries by name, IAEA Director-General Yukiya Amano said his approach to nuclear verification has been "very straightforward" ever since he took office in December 2009.

"All safeguards agreements between member states and the agency, and other relevant obligations such as U.N. Security Council resolutions, should be implemented fully," he told a three-day U.N. Conference on Disarmament Issues in Matsumoto, Japan.

Currently, there are five declared nuclear weapon states, namely the United States, Britain, Russia, France and China, along with three undeclared nuclear weapon states, India, Pakistan and Israel.

The three undeclared nuclear powers have all refused to sign the NPT and remain outside the IAEA radar, as against the five declared nuclear powers who are states parties to the treaty.

Both Iran and Syria are states parties to the NPT. North Korea, on the other hand, withdrew from the treaty in January 2003, and claims it has no obligations under the NPT.

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India Unfazed by Nuclear Suppliers' New Rules

Analysis by Ranjit Devraj

NEW DELHI, Jul 6, 2011 (IPS) - Confident in the large market it offers to the world's nuclear suppliers, India has decided to shrug off new restrictions by a 46-nation cartel on the transfer of uranium enrichment and reprocessing technologies that potentially have military applications.

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Nuclear energy experts in India told IPS that the NSG's move may be prompted by commercial concerns and an attempt to squeeze India into buying nuclear equipment in a market rapidly narrowing down in the wake of the Fukushima disaster.

"Even before Fukushima, India and China were the only countries with major plans to expand nuclear power generation. And now, with China switching to renewable energy, India is the only major buyer left," says Praful Bidwai, a member of the International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation.

"In spite of the many failures of the French supplier Areva, which have resulted in the recent sacking of its CEO, Anne Lauvergeon, India is going ahead with a deal to buy six of its European Pressurised Reactors for the world's biggest ever nuclear power plant at Jaitapur in Maharashtra," Bidwai said. "But for the India deal Areva may have to shut shop."

According to Rajiv Nayan, international partner at the Fissile Materials Working Group and senior research associate at the state-funded Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in New Delhi, the NSG's strictures could jeopardise the Areva deal.

"It is for the NSG to carry India along in the interest of better international nuclear governance and management," Nayan told IPS.

Given the present climate for nuclear energy, countries like France, Russia and the United States, which have already signed major nuclear commerce deals with India, are unlikely to back off, Nayan said.

India has ambitious plans to raise its nuclear power generation from the current 4.7 gigawatts to over 20 Gw by 2020. Besides Areva, Russia's Rosatom and General Electric from the U.S. are among corporations negotiating for deals worth more than 100 billion dollars.

In an apparent warning to the NSG, India's foreign secretary Nirupama Rao told television interviewers on Sunday that there are "leverages" that could be applied to countries unwilling to enter into nuclear commerce with India.

Rao said the U.S., Russia and France had, since the NSG announced its new policy, made known that they would stand by their commitments to India.

French ambassador to India Jerome Bonnafont confirmed in a Jul. 1 press statement that "this NSG decision in no way undermines the parameters of our bilateral cooperation," and that France remained "committed to the full implementation of our cooperation agreement on the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy signed on Sep. 30, 2008. ☺



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"Coming after the decision of exemption from the full-scope safeguards clause, adopted in favour of India in September 2008, it (NSG decision) does not undermine the principles of this exemption," the statement said.

After three decades of isolation, India resumed nuclear commerce with the rest of the world after concluding a civilian nuclear deal with the U.S. in 2008 that allowed it to continue with an indigenously developed nuclear weapons programme.

Nayan said the Indo-U.S. civilian nuclear cooperation deal and the NSG waiver came in spite of strong domestic pressure both in India and the U.S. from peace groups and those supporting nuclear disarmament.

Within the NSG, countries such as Austria, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland had unsuccessfully argued that India be excluded from trade in ENR technologies.

Nayan said, however, that the NSG never actually gave India any explicit assurance on transfer of ENR technologies.

Also, he said, Indian parliament had passed a stiff nuclear liability bill in August 2010 that discouraged international nuclear equipment suppliers – though several bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements have been signed.

As a self-declared nuclear weapons state that is not signatory to the NPT, it would have been difficult, in any case, for India to source nuclear technology or equipment from any country that is a signatory to the treaty.

India provides no guarantees that it will not replicate facilities and technologies for its strategic programme and, in fact, the Indo-U.S. nuclear cooperation agreement allows facilities that are declared to be military in nature to avoid international scrutiny and safeguards. ■

Original: <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=56371>

U.N. Agency Slams Nuclear Rogue Nations

By Thalif Deen

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Currently, there are five declared nuclear weapon states, namely the United States, Britain, Russia, France and China, along with three undeclared nuclear weapon states, India, Pakistan and Israel. The three undeclared nuclear powers have all refused to sign the NPT and remain outside the IAEA radar, as against the five declared nuclear powers who are states parties to the treaty.

North Korea is strongly rumoured to possess nuclear weapons; Iran is suspected of having an active nuclear weapons programme although it vehemently denies the charge; and Syria is accused of making a failed attempt to develop nuclear weapons. ☺





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Both Iran and Syria are states parties to the NPT. North Korea, on the other hand, withdrew from the treaty in January 2003, and claims it has no obligations under the NPT.

But, as a U.N. member state, it has to comply with IAEA and Security Council resolutions.

Amano said the North Korean nuclear programme "remains a matter of serious concern".

"As you may know, since April 2009, the agency has not been able to implement any safeguards measures in that country," he said.

Last year, there were reports that North Korea was in the process of building a new uranium enrichment facility and a light water reactor.

If these reports are true, the IAEA head said, "they are deeply troubling."

Amano urged North Korea to fully implement all of the relevant resolutions of the IAEA General Conference and the Security Council which have imposed strictures and/or sanctions on Pyongyang for non-compliance.

Iran, which also came under fire, has unequivocally stated that its nuclear programme is only for "peaceful purposes".

But both the Security Council and the IAEA have refused to buy this argument.

"Iran is not providing the necessary cooperation to enable the agency to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities, and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities," Amano declared.

He called upon Iran "to move towards the full implementation of all relevant obligations to build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme".

On Syria, the IAEA has concluded it is very likely that a building destroyed at the Dair Alzour site in 2007 - possibly from an air attack by Israel - was a nuclear reactor which should have been declared to the agency. But it was not.

Last month, the IAEA Board of Governors adopted a resolution accusing Syria of "non-compliance with its safeguards obligations".

Meanwhile, the IAEA has been consulting with its member states on the possibility of convening a forum on the relevance of existing nuclear weapon-free zones and to consider establishing such a zone in the Middle East.

But the proposed international conference, tentatively scheduled for 2012, may be in jeopardy amid the growing political turmoil sweeping across the Arab world - and Israel's fears of negative fallout on its own security.

The proposal for the long-outstanding meeting was endorsed by 189 member states at the Review Conference on the NPT held at the United Nations in May 2010.

The Israeli government, while criticising the outcome document of that Review Conference, left the door open for participation in the 2012 conference.

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

Israel has privately expressed the view that its undeclared nuclear weapons are the best guarantee of its security. ■

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Nukes Are Illegal - But Still Around

By Neena Bhandari

SYDNEY (IDN) - Junko Morimoto was 13 years old when the United States of America dropped the first atomic bomb on her hometown of Hiroshima. She was only 1,700 metres away from the hypocentre and if it weren't for a stomach bug that confined her to home, she would have been amongst the 360 students who died at her city centre school on August 6, 1945.

Morimoto has an inoperable brain tumour affecting her balance. Nearly seven decades after the nuclear bombs exploded, Japanese people are still living each day with the terrible aftermath of the radiation on the environment and their health, with genetic damage passing to future generations.



"Hiroshima and Nagasaki taught us two things. One is that we human beings have acquired the ability to create hell. The other is that we are so foolish, untrustworthy and pathetic that we would actually put this frightening ability to use," says Morimoto, an accomplished author and artist who migrated to Australia in 1981.

July 8 marked the 15th anniversary of the International Court of Justice's landmark advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons. The court unanimously held that nations have a legal obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international control.

Advocates for a nuclear-free world addressed a packed public forum at the Melbourne Town Hall on July 5, hosted by The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and the Australian Red Cross.

NOT JUST AN OPTION

Speaking on the occasion, former Liberal Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser said, "Disarmament is not just an option; it is mandated by international law. This is best fulfilled through a nuclear weapons convention – a comprehensive treaty prohibiting the possession of nuclear weapons by any state, and establishing the legal mechanisms necessary to accomplish the elimination of all warheads within a defined period."

Today there are more than 20,000 nuclear weapons in the arsenals of eight or nine countries, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) Yearbook 2011.

The U.S., Russia, the United Kingdom, France, China, India, Pakistan and Israel possess more than 20,500 nuclear weapons. Over 5000 of these weapons are deployed and ready for use, including nearly 2000 that are kept in a state of high operational alert.

An international Global Zero movement for a world without nuclear weapons forecasts that global spending on nuclear weapons would surpass US\$1 Trillion over the next decade. The nuclear weapons countries are collectively spending approximately US\$ 100 billion on their nuclear programs this year.

"Political leaders should understand that nuclear weapons do not contribute to anyone's safety. They make the whole world a much more dangerous place. More and more countries have the knowledge to make a nuclear weapon. If positive moves towards nuclear disarmament are not pushed much harder, more countries will seek nuclear weapons and the danger of nuclear war, by deliberation or by accident, will become greater," Fraser told IDN. ➔



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In April 2010 the U.S and Russia, which possess 95 per cent of the world's nuclear stockpiles, agreed to a modest reduction under the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), but both countries currently are either deploying new nuclear weapon delivery systems or have announced programs to do so. Meanwhile, India and Pakistan continue to develop new ballistic and cruise missile systems capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

Emphasising the urgency to eliminate these weapons, Fraser said, "It is a cause for great concern that there is no genuine multilateral process presently under way to eliminate nuclear weapons. A convention banning the nuclear bomb is long overdue, and Australia should drive the international push for negotiations."

The Australian Prime Minister Julia Gillard has signalled her intention to move a motion on the floor of parliament, calling for a parliamentary resolution on the abolition of nuclear weapons. She has invited Opposition leader Tony Abbott to make this a bi-partisan initiative.

LESS PARTISAN

"This is a perfect opportunity for the government to lift nuclear and disarmament issue into a less partisan and political space to a more humanitarian issue", Dr. Tilman Ruff, Chair of ICAN Australia, told IDN.

Australia is in an interesting situation because as a country it doesn't have any nuclear weapons, but subscribes to the doctrine of extended nuclear deterrence under the U.S alliance.

"So long as Australia relies on U.S. nuclear weapons for its security, its credibility as disarmament advocate will be greatly diminished. With a U.S president sympathetic to the cause of disarmament, the time would appear ideal for Australia to adopt a nuclear-weapon-free defence posture, and begin contributing meaningfully towards nuclear disarmament," Fraser said.

Australia has 40 per cent of the world's uranium reserves and it is a significant uranium exporter. "Our uranium exports do pose a problem for disarmament. Even if there are safeguards agreements in place with countries receiving uranium, there is always a risk that it will be used in weapons or it will be freeing up domestic uranium reserves for that purpose. We need to be looking at ways to wind up the uranium industry in Australia, if we are serious about non-proliferation of nuclear weapons," ICAN Australia's Campaign Director, Tim Wright, told IDN.

The recent nuclear power crisis in Fukushima has alerted governments and public across the world to the inherent dangers of nuclear technology for electricity production. ICAN points out that the starting material is the same and the effects of radiation are completely indiscriminate and identical whether it is radiation from a nuclear reactor or a nuclear bomb.

"Any country that can enrich uranium to reactor grade for nuclear power generation also has everything it would need to enrich uranium to weapons grade. The two are non-separable. There is no restriction on either the enrichment of uranium or reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium. Those are the two sources for fissile materials for weapons and there are currently no international restrictions that restrict countries access to those. That is simply not compatible with either achieving or sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons," Dr. Ruff told IDN.

From Non-Proliferation to Abolition

Advocates for zero nuclear want to shift the focus from non-proliferation to abolition. As former United Nations Assistant Secretary General, Ramesh Thakur said, "We need a multi-phased roadmap to abolition that prioritises concrete steps like introducing more robust firewalls to separate possession from use of nuclear weapons; further significant cuts in existing nuclear arsenals and a freeze on production of fissile materials in the medium term; a verifiable and enforceable new international nuclear weapons convention that requires total and verified destruction of all nuclear stockpiles within our lifetime."

In his view, it is unrealistic to believe that the non-NPT (the 1968 Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty) nuclear-armed states (India, Pakistan and Israel) can be forced to sign the NPT as non-nuclear states. ➔



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The combined destructive force of all nuclear weapons in the world today is equivalent to 150,000 Hiroshima bombs, according to the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.

As Dr Ruff said, "There are profound, severe and unprecedented global consequences from even a relatively small regional use of a tiny fraction of the world's nuclear arsenal. The U.S. National Academy of Sciences concluded unequivocally that there was no way to reliably contain the effects of a nuclear explosion. Nuclear weapons and climate change pose unprecedented threats not only to the living but to the future of humans and the capacity of Earth to support complex life forms. Hence, there is an urgency to get to zero as quickly as possible."

Australian Red Cross is taking a leading role internationally in voicing the need for further laws which confirm the illegality of using nuclear weapons.

As Dr Helen Durham, Red Cross Strategic Adviser, International Law, told IDN, "International law is a very fragmented system of law so it won't be one overarching way to go forward, but I think that countries around the world need to understand that their citizens are concerned about this topic."

Australian Red Cross will be engaging in a public education campaign to ensure people really understand the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. "We will conduct different events and in early November begin a web-based education program to harness young people's interest. It is really about everyone standing up and saying these weapons are unacceptable," Dr Durham said. (IDN-InDepthNews/15.07.2011)

Pugwash and Germany Strive for Nuke-Free World

By Jamshed Baruah

BERLIN (IDN) - Nuclear disarmament has drawn the focus of an international conference in Berlin for the second time in 2011, which might prove to be a stepping stone towards a world free of thousands of nuclear weapons that are a huge menace to global security.

On the same day as Germany assumed the presidency of the UN Security Council on July 1, some 300 current and former policy makers and experts from 43 countries launched the 59th Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs on 'European Contributions to Nuclear Disarmament and Conflict Resolution' with a special day-long symposium focusing on NATO-Russia relationship.

The first conference with foreign ministers of 10 non-nuclear nations stretching across continents was held at the initiative of German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle in April in Berlin.

In their 'Berlin Statement', the foreign ministers of Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates stressed "the crucial need to promote the creation of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in line with pending requirements for the organization in 2012 of the special conference agreed at the (May) 2010 NPT Review Conference" in New York.

This, Westerwelle told Pugwash conference participants, was a clear indication that the German Government was pursuing a world free of nuclear weapons. The participants included key arms negotiators Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov and U.S. Under Secretary Rose Gottemoeller, who addressed further steps in nuclear reductions.

Other participants from around the world included eight current ministers, four former intelligence chiefs, several sitting parliamentarians, among other leading voices from key regions. ➔





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The German foreign minister told them: "Within NATO, we want to include sub-strategic nuclear weapons in the next disarmament talks with Russia. Global Zero, a world freed from the nuclear threat, is our long-term goal. And we will always place these efforts in the larger context that includes conventional arms reductions."

Even before he was appointed Foreign Minister in Germany's conservative-liberal coalition in October 2009, Westerwelle embraced nuclear disarmament as an eminent goal – at home and abroad.

At home it would mean doing away with some 20 nukes on German territory, which the United States continues to maintain despite the fall of the Berlin Wall, end of the cold war and re-unification twenty years ago. Abroad it meant progressing towards a nuclear-weapon free world President Barack Obama pledged to work for in his famous speech in Prague in April 2009.

THREAT TO HUMANKIND

Westerwelle pointed out that nuclear weapons pose a threat to humankind not only when these are in the hands of authoritarian regimes. "Even in the hands of democracies nuclear weapons are not guaranteed to be safe from abuse or negligence," he warned.

Explaining the potential threat of nukes under the control of dictators, the German foreign minister said: "Authoritarian regimes become most troubling when they seek to control nuclear weapons. Iran and North Korea are the most prominent examples. But they need to be put in a larger context."

Referring to an agreement achieved at the 2010 conference on nuclear non-proliferation in New York, he said: "After ten years of stagnation, disarmament process has got off to a solid start in this new decade. The Convention on Cluster Munitions has come into force last summer. NATO made the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons part of its new strategy. The United States and Russia ratified a new START Treaty on reducing strategic nuclear weapons."

"This is not only good news for you as experts. This is excellent news for mankind. Disarmament is as important a task for humanity as combating climate change," he added.

Westerwelle assured: "Our policy towards peace and security is deeply rooted in the United Nations. The answer to global challenges is a strong Europe within a strong United Nations based on strong international law. To retain its credibility as the cornerstone of international security and legitimacy, the United Nations needs to adapt to the realities of the 21st century."

Africa, South America and Asia are not adequately represented in the Security Council, he said, in an oblique reference to the 'G4' – Japan, Germany, India and Brazil – nations' initiative to enlarge the Security Council, with South Africa often mentioned as the fifth in the league.

Addressing the symposium, 'Reducing the Role of Nuclear Weapons in the NATO-Russia Relationship,' on June 30, Westerwelle's deputy, Werner Hoyer said: "Our joint political goal – further reductions in nuclear arms – can only come about by using the cooperative instrument of fostering dialogue and mutual confidence."

2010 was a good year for arms control, he said, referring to the consensus reached at the NPT Review Conference after 10 years of deadlock, the signing of New START and the adoption of NATO's new strategic concept.

"Nevertheless, we cannot rest on our laurels. We have to focus now on the open issues. Concrete problems in the NATO-Russia relationship cannot be argued away. It is therefore important to clearly indicate what the problems are, and to try and find adequate solutions," Hoyer said.

The "problems" needing solutions related to nuclear weapons reductions, invigorating conventional arms control, and how to establish a missile defence system that NATO and Russia can both benefit from. ➡



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NATO-RUSSIA PROBLEMS

Hoyer said, the new Strategic Concept adopted at the Lisbon summit expressed NATO's readiness to create the conditions for further reductions of nuclear weapons stationed in Europe. At the same time it also pointed at the need to address the disparity with the much greater Russian stockpile.

"Unfortunately, in the last months official Russian voices have made it quite clear that Moscow is not very interested in discussing the topic of its sub-strategic nuclear arsenal," regretted, adding: "This rejection should not prevent us from discussing concrete proposals, at least for initiating a possible future reduction process."

One idea, he suggested, could be to revive the so-called U.S.-Russian Presidential Initiatives of 1991/92. Since those days, non-strategic weapons have not been the object of arms control efforts. We are aware that addressing them in a New START follow-on process will be a complex and challenging issue – both with regard to the political and the technical aspects.

"As a starting point we could aim at improving transparency and confidence-building. Implementation of the 1991/92 commitments has never been subject to any accountability or verification, which adds an additional hurdle to re-engaging on these weapons. But this should not prevent us from getting started," said Hoyer.

PUGWASH

Stressing the significance of the conference, Pugwash president and former UN Under Secretary General for disarmament, Jayantha Dhanapala; said: "Pugwash focuses on decreasing the salience of nuclear weapons, and promotes nuclear disarmament."

Ahead of the conference, he said. "The Simons (Foundation) Symposium will demonstrate the urgency of addressing broader security issues that will open the door for deeper nuclear cuts, and will seek to regain lost momentum following the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The European example is significant, and can have tremendous positive effects on decreasing nuclear threats in other parts of the world."

Pugwash Secretary General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino said: "This world-class gathering, devoted to the idea of seeking diplomatic solutions to conflict, will gather inspiration from the city of Berlin. If walls could come down in Berlin, then we also have the possibility to solve challenging issues in other parts of the world: South Asia, the Middle East, the Korean peninsula."

Cotta-Ramusino added: "We also are very pleased to organize this event in cooperation with the VDW, the German Pugwash Group, which has long historic leadership in promoting solutions to some of the world's most difficult challenges at the intersection of science and society."

Whether such expectations were fulfilled remained anyone's guess. But panels at the conference addressed key issues such as whether talking to the Taliban could help prospects in Afghanistan, the Iranian nuclear programme, decreasing tensions between India and Pakistan, the Arab Spring, progress in the Israel-Palestine conflict, eliminating weapons of mass destruction, and nuclear energy post-Fukushima.

Looking back, a conference source recalled that the first historic Pugwash Conference was held in Pugwash, Nova Scotia, Canada, in 1957 at the height of the Cold War, bringing senior scientists from across political divides to discuss in a cooperative setting ways to diminish the nuclear dangers facing society. The meeting resulted from the 1955 Russell-Einstein Manifesto. Adding his name to this manifesto was the last public act of Albert Einstein's life.

The importance of Pugwash Conference was recognized when Pugwash and one of its founders, Joseph Rotblat, jointly received the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize "for their efforts to diminish the part played by nuclear arms in international politics and, in the longer run, to eliminate such arms". (IDN-InDepthNews/05.07.2011) ■



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The Five Big Again Talk Nuclear Disarmament

By Tony Robinson*

LONDON (IDN) - The five veto-wielding permanent (P5) members of the UN Security Council – China, France, Russia, Britain and the United States – met in Paris on June 30 and July 1, 2011 to deal with an issue that carries with it the survival of the planet: nuclear disarmament.

The conference was a follow up to the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference in New York in May 2010, and the conference on Confidence Building Measures towards disarmament and non-proliferation issues in September 2009 in London.

The five governments expectedly reaffirmed their unconditional support for the NPT and the Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. A tangible result of the Paris gathering was agreement on a meeting of technical experts in London later in 2011 to continue discussing issues of verification and to meet again in Vienna as the next NPT review cycle gets underway in May 2012.

The major issues that the conference studied were those of transparency and mutual confidence; everyone being fully aware that you can sign all the treaties you like but unless disarmament can be unequivocally verified the reality is that given the belligerent attitude of the West in their wars of "human rights/control of resources" China and Russia would do well to keep their nuclear deterrent because it would appear to be the only negotiating tool that the USA respects – just look at North Korea.

It is hard to imagine, even with satellites in space taking photos of every square metre of the planet, how verification can be assured. All five countries have access to sufficient conventional weapon technology which is currently legal. China, Russia, and the USA have space programmes which allow them to build rockets that can drop bombs anywhere on the planet and the Europeans have their own space programme launching rockets from South America.

The U.S. drone technology being so well developed for use in Afghanistan also shows that delivery technology is becoming increasingly sophisticated. And of course all P5 have access to the nuclear material necessary for making bombs which can be found in the nuclear power stations that each of them have developed precisely for this purpose.

Even with 100 percent compliance with the NPT by all countries of the world, with all these components readily available, any country with them would be no more than a few months from constructing another bomb and already over 40 countries either have nuclear reactors or plan to have them in coming years.

Another area of P5 discussion was the subject of withdrawal from the treaty. Article X allows states to withdraw from the NPT if they give three months notice to the UN on the condition that the withdrawing state, "decides that extraordinary events related to the subject matter of the Treaty have jeopardized its supreme interests."

This article has only been invoked by North Korea so far and the P5 are keen to ensure that no others follow suit. Here the message to Iran is clear. With Iranian development of nuclear reactors, and technology to enrich uranium to the extent where a bomb could be made, regardless of Tehran's expression of benign intent of her energy programme, no one is fooled for a minute that this is another attempt by a country to safeguard its security in the same way as North Korea.

Iran's moves are putting enormous strain on the NPT as Saudi Arabian Prince Turki al-Faisal recently informed NATO at a meeting in the UK that if Iran develops a nuclear weapon, Saudi Arabia will follow suit.

*Tony Robinson is the International Spokesperson for the Organisation World without Wars and Violence. ➔



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The significance of the NPT lies in the fact that it is a delicate balancing act between peaceful and military purposes of nuclear science. Sensitive to the limitations of oil, coal and gas supplies, the potential for releasing huge amounts of energy in controlled nuclear reactors has been something that the whole world was keen to embrace ever since Einstein realised the potential behind his equation $E=mc^2$.

The only problem is that the by-product of nuclear energy as generated by uranium is plutonium which is an essential component of nuclear bombs.

The problem that the NPT tried to grapple with when it was negotiated was how to allow nations to pursue their "right" to nuclear energy with the problem of not allowing these same nations to gather enough plutonium to make a bomb with it.

Out of this paradox came the NPT which has ever since been identified as having three pillars: 1) non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to countries outside the P-5 (articles I and II), 2) disarmament of existing nuclear weapons states (article VI) and 3) the "right" to pursue nuclear energy (article IV).

The NPT was negotiated back in the 1960's, long before incidents such as the Three-Mile Island, Chernobyl and Fukushima scarred the consciousness of the world with the horror of what goes wrong when radioactive material escapes the containment of nuclear reactors and the control of human beings – and long before the nuclear energy industry emerged into a huge lobbying force in the politics of the U.S. and elsewhere.

190 countries are parties to the NPT: sadly all four Nuclear Weapons States – India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea – that joined the club after the P5 are not among them. This makes talks about global disarmament somewhat difficult.

THREE PILLARS

Where does the world stand in terms of the three pillars of NPT?

Non-proliferation: From a starting point of five nations with nuclear weapons capability in 1970, a situation has been reached where nine nations have nuclear weapons: India (1974), Pakistan (1998) and North Korea (2006) joining Israel who have neither confirmed or denied having them but who are widely recognised to have them.

In addition, five NATO countries host U.S. weapons (Belgium, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Turkey) in contravention of article I and II of the NPT. Although doubts remain over Iran's intentions, certainly at the time of writing no one believes Iran is close to a bomb.

Nuclear energy: According to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), 29 countries generate a portion of their energy from nuclear power stations, with a further 18 countries in the stages of planning, construction or investigating the possibility.

Disarmament: From the height of the Cold War doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) where there were about 65,000 nuclear warheads – each one vastly more destructive than the two dropped on Japan – since the fall of the Soviet Union these numbers have dropped and today there remain around 22,000 with the USA and Russia accounting for roughly 90 percent of the total between them.

What stands in the way of sizeable disarmament is that nuclear weaponry is a big industry. According to Global Zero, one trillion US dollars will be spent on nuclear weapons alone in the next decade. This is an absolutely enormous sum, and any businessman or woman in the industry is going to be keen to ensure that this situation stays the same.

CTBT

The P5 Paris conference also had the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) to ban nuclear explosion testing on its agenda. Two of the P5, the USA and China, have not yet ratified it, and whereas Iran and Israel have at least signed it, India, Pakistan and North Korea have yet to do so. ➡



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President Barack Obama made the ratification of the CTBT a campaign promise in the 2008 U.S. presidential election. Given that the ratification of the new START treaty – to reduce the number of deployed nuclear warheads – cost him \$185 billion dollars as the price tag for the nuclear weapons modernisation programme that was a condition of ratification by a Republican-majority Senate, one can rightly wonder how much it will cost the President to get the CTBT ratified if he tries, as expected, in a second term as President.

FMCT

Another treaty under the spotlight in Paris was the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), a treaty proposed to prohibit the further production of nuclear weapons material. This is currently a subject of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), an International body to negotiate arms control and disarmament agreements.

In the past the CD has been responsible for the establishment of conventions to ban biological and chemical weapons. Now it has been tasked with negotiating the FMCT but Pakistan currently refuses all attempts to move forward on a programme of work.

NUKE FREE MIDDLE EAST

Finally the conference welcomed the steps taken towards the holding of a conference in 2012 to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The vast majority of the planet is already covered by nuclear-weapon-free zones and ever since the NPT review conference in 1995 the subject of a nuke free zone in the Middle East has been on the agenda. Iran has frequently called for moves to be made in this direction and it was a great surprise for many observers of the NPT review conference in May 2010 to see this action point and the specific call for Israel to ratify the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state.

This is an intriguing prospect: Israel, although widely recognised as having nuclear weapons, has always maintained a policy of ambiguity. In 2010 the final NPT review conference singled out Israel for not signing the NPT, much to Israel's consternation, leading Jerusalem to issue a statement saying the resolution was "deeply flawed and hypocritical," and "ignores the realities of the Middle East and the real threats facing the region and the entire world."

It concluded: "As a non-signatory state of the NPT, Israel is not obligated by the decisions of this conference, which has no authority over Israel. Given the distorted nature of this resolution, Israel will not be able to take part in its implementation."

That was in 2010: though since then the world has changed considerably around Israel: an Arab Spring has swept aside governments in Tunisia and Egypt, war is raging in Libya and Syria, Bahrain and the Yemen among many other places have suffered continual protests ever since.

Though the P-5 welcomed the steps taken by the U.S., Russia and the UK towards holding a Conference on a Middle East WMD Free Zone (MEWMDFZ) in 2012, it remains to be seen whether such a conference will take place.

CIVIL SOCIETY

But, disappointed by the continual refusal of their governments to start negotiations to disarm, civil society continues to organise itself to keep up the pressure. To mark the Paris meeting, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons (ICAN) – a network of some 200 anti-nuclear organisations – declared June 25, 2011 Nuclear Abolition Day, and organised events in 25 countries to raise awareness and try to direct the world's attention to the conference in France.

1984 Nobel Peace Laureate in Desmond Tutu called on civil society to keep up the pressure. In a Project Syndicate column, he wrote: "We must not tolerate a system of nuclear apartheid, in which it is considered legitimate for some states to possess nuclear arms but patently unacceptable for others to seek to acquire them. Such a double standard is no basis for peace and security in the world. The NPT is not a license for the five original nuclear powers to cling to these weapons indefinitely. The International Court of Justice has affirmed that they are legally obliged to negotiate in good faith for the complete elimination of their nuclear forces." ➔



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He added: "In time, every government will come to accept the basic inhumanity of threatening to obliterate entire cities with nuclear weapons. They will work to achieve a world in which such weapons are no more – where the rule of law, not the rule of force, reigns supreme, and cooperation is seen as the best guarantor of international peace. But such a world will be possible only if people everywhere rise up and challenge the nuclear madness."

This is a call to an 'Anti-Nuclear Spring'. Will the people listen? Sadly until the media pay attention to the global threat of nuclear devastation, the answer is probably not. In the midst of the rush for nuclear madness in the sixties President Kennedy, in an attempt to push for the abolition of nuclear weapons, addressed the UN in these terms: "Today, every inhabitant of this planet must contemplate the day when this planet may no longer be habitable. Every man, woman and child lives under a nuclear Sword of Damocles, hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or by madness. The weapons of war must be abolished before they abolish us."

Fifty years later nukes are still around, threatening a nuclear holocaust. (IDN-InDepthNews/04.07.2011) ■

Translations | Adaptations

India Unfazed by Nuclear Suppliers' New Rules

GERMAN > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=430:kernmaterial-indien&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

JAPANESE > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=432:india-unfazed&catid=2:japanese&Itemid=3

TURKISH > <http://ipsinternational.org/tr/news.asp?idnews=130>

U.N. Agency Slams Nuclear Rogue Nations

ARABIC > <http://www.ipsinternational.org/arabic/nota.asp?idnews=2232>

GERMAN > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=448:iaea-schelte&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

JAPANESE > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=451:un-agency-slams-in-japanese&catid=2:japanese&Itemid=3

Nukes Are Illegal - But Still Around

JAPANESE > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=443:2011-07-18-16-24-26&catid=2:japanese&Itemid=3

Pugwash and Germany Strive for Nuke-Free World

ARABIC > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=456:pugwash-germany&catid=3:arabic&Itemid=4

HINDI > http://www.polyglot.indepthnews.net/pugwash_and_germany_strive_for_nuke-free_world_Hindi.html

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The Five Big Again Talk Nuclear Disarmament

CHINESE > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=454:2011-08-04-08-26-10&catid=14:chinese-hindi-urdu-persian&Itemid=15

JAPANESE > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=439:five-big&catid=2:japanese&Itemid=3



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What Others Say

Nuclear Ban Objections and Answers

By Frederick N. Mattis*



ANNAPOLIS, USA - While the 1968 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] adjures its signatory states to pursue nuclear disarmament, there is no NPT provision for specific progress toward that goal. The view is now spreading that the time has come for a new treaty, to replace the NPT and to eliminate all nuclear weapons. Several objections to such a treaty [convention] are summarily responded to here.

1. If a few states, or even just one, refused to join a nuclear ban treaty, it would be weak and inadequate.

As a condition of treaty entry into force, all states would have to join the nuclear ban – or else states such as the USA would not join. The nine current nuclear weapon states do have their reasons for maintaining their arsenals; but most are grounded in the reality of other states' nuclear possession (which would disappear under a nuclear ban), plus in some cases now thankfully-attenuated Cold War power-bloc relationships.

After introduction for states' signatures of a worldwide nuclear ban treaty, the import and influence of "lingering" or atavistic rationales for nuclear possession will likely wane in states' estimations and come to be outweighed by the fundamental benefits to all people and states of a world without nuclear weapons: freedom from nuclear war or attack, freedom from possible "false-alarm" nuclear strike, and elimination of risk of terrorist nuclear acquisition from a state's arsenal.

Since unanimity of accession by states to the nuclear ban treaty would be required for its entry into force, the treaty advisedly should proclaim that "future states" must abide by the treaty's prohibitions of nuclear weapons and non-safeguarded fissionable materials and must promptly accede to the treaty. Strictures (such as these) on "future states" are unprecedented for a treaty but justified by the unanimity of accession by extant states before entry into force. Also, the treaty would proclaim that it applies everywhere to cover realms such as space, the oceans, and non-state or ambiguous terrestrial areas.

2. Even if states' nuclear arsenals are abolished under a unanimously joined treaty, that would not prevent states from stockpiling chemical or biological weapons.

This concern can be greatly eased by a nuclear ban treaty provision requiring states to be parties to the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) before signing the nuclear ban treaty. Most states, including the USA and Russia, are already parties to the chem-bio bans; and only in the range of five to eight states are widely considered as maintaining active chemical or biological weapons programs (or both).

For that handful of states (including Egypt, Syria, Iran), the recompense of liberation from the supreme, nuclear threat would help induce them to formally renounce those weapons by joining the CWC and BWC – especially because most such states' [presumed] chemical and/or biological weapons are largely in opposition to nuclear weapons possessed by another state or states.

Certainly today's nuclear weapon states would applaud a requirement that states formally renounce chem-bio weapons before signing the nuclear ban, and thus this provision would be an added inducement for the nuclear weapon states to join the prospective, worldwide nuclear ban. Also: if, prior CWC-BWC accession was not required, then at least one state (Israel) almost certainly would not join the nuclear ban, and it would not enter into force. ➡

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3. A state could simply withdraw from an enacted nuclear ban and thereby destroy the nuclear weapons-free world.

The nuclear ban treaty, in addition to being permanent (as are many treaties), would be "non-withdrawal." Further, states would be pledged by nuclear ban terms to "non-withdrawal" from the CWC and BWC, once the nuclear ban achieves unanimous accession by states and enters into force – so that then all states would be permanent parties to the three agreements banning nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

Treaties in general do permit parties to withdraw. If, though, a nuclear ban treaty likewise allowed legal withdrawal, states such as the USA would be reluctant to join due to apprehension that a state might "capriciously" but legally and therefore quite easily withdraw from the enacted treaty and thereby end the benefits of a nuclear weapons-free world. Also, if withdrawal was permitted there would be concern that states might be tempted to hint at withdrawal (with it being "perfectly legal"), in an attempt to gain leverage over other states on some future geopolitical matter.

The looming question then is: with "withdrawal" not permitted, what if a state did transgress the worldwide treaty – in effect, withdraw from it – and build or attempt to build nuclear weapons? In event of such material breach of the treaty, a state if it deemed it necessary could "ignore" (for duration of the breach) the nuclear ban treaty under color of Article 60(2) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (the "treaty on treaties").

However, the nuclear ban would require a state, before undertaking any otherwise treaty-prohibited activity in response to the here-positing "material breach," to publicly proclaim which state it arraigns as in such breach, and to present "attained credible evidence" of the charge. This mandated prior naming of the state-in-breach would prevent a state from being able to claim any justification for undertaking or attempting to undertake treaty-prohibited activity in secret and later on claiming it did so because another state "was already in material breach."

After cessation of a state's initial material breach of the treaty, states would be legally bound to return to treaty terms – because the treaty does not permit withdrawal. In the event that more than one state had redeveloped some nuclear weapons, then it is likely that world opinion would successfully urge them to confer and agree to simultaneously return to full treaty participation.

(With the above said, the chance of initial, pernicious material breach would be miniscule; see #5 below.)

4. A state could undermine the treaty, or gain advantage on other states, by enacting national (domestic) treaty implementing legislation that is inadequate or contradictory to treaty terms, or by submitting false or misleading nuclear declarations (for baseline verification purposes) to the treaty regime.

Attendant to the above two phases of the treaty process (which both occur before warhead elimination even begins), the treaty would permit a state to publicly object and thereby halt further treaty steps until the state withdraws its objection, presumably after the situation of concern is resolved.

The reason is that in negotiating a nuclear ban treaty, some states will probably insist that they maintain under treaty terms their specified autonomy of judgment and prerogative to suspend further treaty implementation with respect to these crucial two initial phases – i.e., states' institution of suitable national treaty implementing legislation, and then states' submission of treaty-required nuclear-related "declarations," with this latter phase encompassing issue of co-operation by states on verification of declarations (which, of course, would be evaluated and reported on by the nuclear ban inspection regime).

Notwithstanding, it is very likely that all treaty implementation phases, including above crucial ones of adequate, treaty-consonant national implementing legislation by states plus good-faith nuclear declarations and cooperation in their verification, would indeed be carried out by states with diligence and good faith – so no state would be "provoked" by another to "suspend" (in the face of world scrutiny, though) further implementation of the treaty.

The extreme probability of good-faith compliance with nuclear ban requirements is based primarily on the unprecedented geopolitical, legal, psychological, and moral impact of unanimous accession by states before treaty entry into force. ☞



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5. Even with the nuclear ban fully and successfully enacted, a state nonetheless at some future time could break out of the worldwide treaty and thereby end the nuclear-free world and its security benefits.

The chance of material breach or breakout in all future history cannot be said to be scientifically zero but would be miniscule, in part because of recognition that the benefits of a nuclear weapons-free world to all states and people can only be maintained by fealty of all states to the nuclear ban treaty. A further deterrent to cheating or to overt breakout would be the treaty's equal treatment of states – unlike today's Non-Proliferation Treaty, with its five "nuclear weapon" parties. States would also unerringly foresee that opposition to a pernicious violator of the unanimously-joined treaty would pour forth, on multiple levels, from all the world's other states. (IDN-InDepthNews/15.07.2011) ■

Also available at > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=441:nuke-ban&catid=16:nuclear-abolition-news-and-analysis&Itemid=17

Pride and Prejudice Hindering Dialogue with Iran

By Gunnar Westberg*



Prodded by the United States, the UN Security Council has repeatedly asked Iran to stop all uranium enrichment, although the NPT rules do not prohibit such an upgrading by member countries. No surprise that Iran finds such demands discriminating. But the nuclear program may also have a military purpose. In a few years Iran may be in a position to say: "We can produce nuclear weapons in a very short time, if we are forced to make that decision." The shock of the attack by Iraq in 1980 runs deep in the bones.

GOTHENBURG - The most frequent question to me during my three visits to Iran was: How can we convince the West that our country is not going to produce nuclear weapons? The question I hear in Europe and USA is: When will Iran have nuclear weapons? There seems to be a need for a dialogue. No one wants a war. It might still happen and may escalate into a nuclear genocide.

Why does Iran have a nuclear program? The country has enormous reserves of oil and gas. Why then nuclear power? During the sixties and seventies, the time of the Shah, the reason was probably first of all a part of the "Westernization" of the country. After the Islamic revolution in 1979 it became a symbol of the nation's independence and defiance against foreign pressure.

Before 1979 Iran was assured of uranium fuel deliveries from USA. Iran had also invested in a uranium enrichment plant in France. When USA and France broke the agreements after the Islamic revolution and even kept the money Iran had paid, it became a matter of prestige to develop an independent enrichment facility. Officially the fuel would be needed for the power plants that were planned.

However, the only plant built so far, the Buser reactor, is supplied with fuel from Russia. No other power plants are being built or decided. The small research reactor which produces isotopes for medical investigations and which uses uranium enriched to 20% will soon have its need satisfied. Thus, nuclear power generation is not an explanation or the enrichment program.

*Gunnar Westberg was Co-President of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). Now he is a member of its Board. After having served as the Transnational Foundation for Peace and Future Research (TFF) Associate since 2002, he joined the Board of the foundation in October 2008. This article first appeared on <http://peaceandhealthblog.com> on June 22, 2011. ↻



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The uranium enrichment program has cost Iran dearly. The enrichment plant should have been declared to the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, as Iran was a member of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, NPT. After an investigation the IAEA experts were satisfied that Iran had declared in sufficient detail the activities at the plant.

The IAEA Board of Governors, made up to a large degree by representatives of participant governments, decided after considerable persuasion from the USA that Iran's breach against the rules of IAEA should be reported to the United Nations Security Council, UNSC. The council has repeatedly demanded that Iran should stop all uranium enrichment, although the NPT rules do not prohibit uranium enrichment by member countries.

PRESTIGE

Is prestige really a sufficient reason? It may be. Prestige is the main reason for the continued existence of the French nuclear weapons program, maybe also for that of India. But the nuclear program may also have a military purpose. In a few years Iran may be in a position to say: We can produce nuclear weapons in a very short time, if we are forced to make that decision.

Forced? We must remember the attack by Iraq against Iran 1980, which led to the longest war in the previous century. The use of chemical weapons by Iraq has left a scar in the minds of the Iranians. Iraq was supported by the West, and Saddam Hussein was congratulated by the U.S. representative Donald Rumsfeld shortly after the gas attacks. Many Iranians feel that if they had obtained nuclear weapons Iraq would not have attacked.

A military attack against Iran is unlikely today. Yes, a sizable group of Republican Congressmen in the USA did last year demand preparations for a possible pre-emptive attack on Iran. Yes, not infrequently a member of the Israeli government pops up and demands the same. However, no rational government in either country would attack Iran. There is still a cost for acting against the international opinion, and a cost for foolishness. Similarly, a premeditated attack from Iran against a neighbour is out of the question. The Iranian leaders do not want to commit suicide.

But often wars are not planned. They happen. Attacks by Hezbollah against Israel, seen as initiated from Iran, could lead to increased tension, escalation and finally an Israeli attack against Iran. In a situation like this, generals in Iran would consider a nuclear deterrent useful.

The domestic political scene in Iran is very complicated. There are several counterbalancing centres of power, religious, political, economical and military. It is not possible for anyone to predict the outcome of a power struggle in a situation of international tension.

WHAT TO DO

What can be done to decrease the risk of a war?

Iran should ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, CTBT. This would increase the confidence that the country will not develop nuclear weapons. The inverse is even more important: Iran's refusal to ratify the treaty is taken as an indication that the country is considering nuclear weapons.

To terminate the uranium enrichment would be an even more reassuring decision. However, the international pressure on Iran through the UNSC is working in the other direction. Iran considers with good reason that this demand is unjustified. It is indeed difficult for Iran to bow to pressure from the superpower after having fought for the program for so long. A compromise could be that Iran continues the program until the need of the research reactor in Tehran is filled and then keeps the program going at low speed. Thus Iran would keep the competence.

Furthermore, President Ahmadinejad should make it unequivocally clear that Iran has no intention to attack Israel. He has certainly never said that Iran will attack Israel, but his statements that "the Zionist state will disappear" must be clarified. He and all Iranian leaders understand that an attack on Israel would have terrible consequences for Iran. ☹



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The government of Israel should do likewise and declare that a pre-emptive attack against Iran is out of the question. This should not be a difficult thing for the Israeli leaders to do, although it might cause an uproar from the parties to the right and from extreme religious groups. In the U.S. there are also extremists, both Jewish and Christian, who believe that pre-emptive war is the solution.

The superpower, USA, ought to be able to change its policies. To threaten Iran with even harder sanctions will only serve to unite people against the foreign pressure. During the leadership of president Khatami Iran tried to negotiate with the West, and the uranium enrichment was discontinued. The US president responded by calling Iran a member of the Axis of Evil and reintroduced sanctions. The Iranian leaders learnt the lesson, and the people rejected the accommodating policies in the next election.

There are strong groups in Iran that want to end Iran's isolation. The desire to increase trade is strong and widespread. An admiration of and fascination with USA is common. This should be taken advantage of by the West. Trade is a key, and intellectual and cultural exchange is another. It is strange that the USA does not understand how contagious a free market, intellectual freedom and democracy are.

To give up a policy that has failed takes courage and strong leadership. This is missing in all three partners, Iran, Israel and USA. Possibly Russia and Europe could find ways to turn the politics of sanctions and enmity around and give the USA an excuse to search a new course.

WMD-FREE MIDDLE EAST

Next year a conference is planned to establish a Zone free of Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East. Maybe this can give an opportunity? Israel is reluctant to participate, but there is also an understanding in that country that the intransigence and the reliance on military power that Israel has developed will not be tolerated forever, not even in the USA. If the conference fails, the Nonproliferation Treaty is in danger, a treaty which is of value for all parties. In order to make the work of that conference possible compromises and new attitudes are necessary from all parties.

In the long run the present situation is dangerous and can lead to a devastating war. All parties must give up a cherished illusion that the other side will retreat if the confrontation is escalated sufficiently. Fear and prestige has ruled for too long. New thinking is needed and the conference gives a possibility which should not be wasted.

I finish with words of the Danish poet – and nuclear physicist! – Piet Hein:

The noble art of losing face

Might one day save the human race

And turn into eternal merit

What weaker minds would call disgrace.

Salam! Shalom! Peace! (IDN-InDepthNews/27.07.2011) ■



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What Others Say

An Indian Anti-Nuclear Movement?

By Jayita Sarkar*

In the wake of the Indo-US nuclear deal of 2008 allowing India to engage in civilian nuclear trade, protest movements have emerged in several sites chosen for the construction of new nuclear power plants. India is aiming to establish at least thirty nuclear reactors and derive a quarter of its electricity needs from nuclear energy by 2050. [1]



With the establishment of the Atomic Energy Research Committee in 1946 and adoption of the Atomic Energy Act in 1948, India had proceeded rather early on the path of atomic energy. Yet, two aspects related to the atomic energy programme are striking – first, the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and subsequently the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) have failed to match their own estimates of electricity production; and second, there has been little public debate on these failures. Public awareness of even the nuclear tests of May 1998 and the “peaceful nuclear explosion” of May 1974 is strikingly low.

According to a poll [2] conducted in 1999 in 108 parliamentary constituencies by the Delhi-based Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), 65 per cent of the population surveyed had heard of the Kargil conflict between India and Pakistan and yet 54 per cent of the same population had not heard of the nuclear tests that preceded it. The threat of nuclear weapons do not really cast a shadow on the psyche of the Indian masses and debates on a nuclear deterrent against Pakistan or India’s relation with the non-proliferation regime remain restricted largely to the urban elites. The only atomic contact that could have touched the lives of people throughout the country is electricity-generation through nuclear plants – a task which the AEC/DAE has famously failed to perform.

With the beginning of “nuclear renaissance”, the masses are increasingly coming in contact with the nuclear establishment in the form of nuclear power plants. Protests are emerging at sites like Jaitapur in Maharashtra where six nuclear reactors are scheduled to be built. Similarly, in Gorakhpur, Fatehabad, one can see a certain “nuclear awareness” on the part of the protesters. Yet, it must also be admitted that these protests are case-specific with land acquisition by the government as the people’s main source of anguish.

While the nuclear disaster in Fukushima has put more wind in the sails of groups like the Konkan Bachao Samiti (KBS) in Jaitapur and the Gandhian “National Alliance of People’s Movement” (NAPM), there is yet to emerge a comprehensive anti-nuclear or peace movement in India as was seen in Europe in the 1980s with groups like the UK-based Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) and the European Nuclear Disarmament (END). It is, however, true that a nuclear threat does not configure as strongly for the Indian public as it was for a Europe threatened by superpower missile-deployment at the height of the New Cold War.

In India, the protests against nuclear power plants, which are essentially protests against land acquisition, are often politicised by the involvement of groups like the Shiv Sena and the Left parties as in the case of the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Project (JNPP). It is alleged that the Shiv Sena is struggling to win back its support base in the Konkan region and is therefore encouraging the protests. Thus, it is difficult to classify these protests as a “peace movement” or even as a nuclear abolitionist call. It is surprising that despite the long and twisted nuclear history of India, there is till date only one dedicated anti-nuclear journal in the country, namely Anumukti, which has been in publication for the last two decades.

Yet, there are actors calling for an end to nuclear weapons in the country. These actors do not belong to grassroots organisations but are prominent citizens’ groups like the Delhi-based Parmanu Bomb Virodhi Andolan (PBVA), journalist-activists like Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, loosely formed groups like the Coalition for Nuclear Disarmament and Peace (CNDP) and international NGOs like Greenpeace. Greenpeace India launched its anti-nuclear campaign after the adoption of the Nuclear Liability Bill in 2010, and is calling for a phase-out of India’s nuclear programme. Besides, immediately after Pokhran II, some scientists formed the group Indian Scientists Against Nuclear Weapons (ISANW) with the goal of disseminating information related to the dangers of nuclear weapons. ➔

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What Others Say

It would nevertheless be unrealistic to expect India to forego either nuclear weapons or nuclear energy. Both are here to stay and a nuclear rollback is unlikely despite the horrors of Fukushima and Chernobyl. It is a moot point whether there is an anti-nuclear peace movement in India or the protests against nuclear power plants are merely against land acquisition. But it is imperative that the Indian nuclear establishment and the DAE ensure transparency and demonstrate responsibility towards the wider public. The DAE has always shrouded itself in secrecy, protected by the Atomic Energy Acts of 1948 and 1963 and the Official Secrets Act of 1923.

However, as nuclear energy is set to touch upon more and more lives in the country whether in the form of electricity or in the form of loss of land for atomic power projects, the department has to bring about greater clarity and transparency in its operations, especially on issues concerning nuclear safety, disaster management, environmental issues, estimated building and running costs of the nuclear plants and other relevant information.

The department's annual report is difficult to decipher for non-specialists. If information is made available, it should also be made intelligible to the people. It is to be noted that even the elites opine that information available on nuclear matters is insufficient. According to a poll conducted in 1996, only 13 per cent of the elites polled believed that they had enough information on nuclear matters. [3]

Science and scientists generally possess a high degree of respectability in India. While corruption touches upon almost every aspect of public life, it is believed that the scientific establishment does not experience much corruption or if it does at all it is fairly low. [4]

In a country, therefore, where the atomic enclave is led by nuclear scientists directly under the control of the Prime Minister and where the society is in awe of the miracles science can deliver, a comprehensive anti-nuclear movement runs the risk of being construed as anti-science. Being anti-science is synonymous to being irrational and anti-modern – the epithets of backwardness that the colonial power had used against the natives and as a result the adjectives that post-colonial India was in a rush to give up as it proceeded on its path to development through scientific progress and self-reliance. This is the dilemma that affects above all the “rational and individualistic” middle classes – the missing component in India's anti-nuclear movement.

Thus, as plans are sanctioned for the construction of nuclear power plants and as farmers rush to save their lands from state acquisition, an anti-nuclear movement would be far from a take off. It would remain largely a marginal movement with some sporadic spurts depending on the issue at hand, the site in question and the political parties involved. (July 28, 2011) ■

[1] “'Massive' Uranium Find in Andhra Pradesh,” *BBC World News Online*, July 19, 2011, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-south-asia-14196372>.

[2] Yogendra Yadav and Sanjay Kumar, “Interpreting the Mandate,” *Frontline*, November 5, 1999, pp. 120-125.

[3] David Cortright and Amitabh Mattoo, eds., *India and the Bomb: Public Opinion and Nuclear Options* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996).

[4] Robert S. Anderson, *Nucleus and Nation: Scientists, International Networks and Power in India* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

Source URL: http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/AnIndianAntiNuclearMovement_jsarkar_280711



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ICAN launches in Africa



11 July 2011 - ICAN Africa was launched at the 6th African Regional Safe Communities Conference in Livingstone, Zambia, during the week of July 4. Senior campaigner Arielle Denis joined IPPNW's African leaders and representatives from the World Health Organization, the University of South Africa, Mozambique University, the Zambian Ministry of Health, and the Zambian Road Traffic Safety Agency to discuss the ways in which the nuclear abolition issue presents itself in the larger context of armed violence, human rights, and development in Africa, and to draft a campaign plan that can engage civil society groups and governments in the region to work for a Nuclear Weapons Convention.

The Safe Communities Conference itself, chaired by IPPNW Co-president Robert Mtonga, addressed a broad range of safety and security problems including landmines, domestic injuries, interpersonal violence, deaths and injuries from small arms and light weapons, and even traffic injuries, which are a growing problem in African countries. The conference drew more than 80 researchers, physicians, NGO representatives, and officials from the WHO and governments.

Although threats from nuclear weapons can appear somewhat remote to many Africans, given these other very immediate health and security concerns, participants at the conference proved eager to work for a nuclear-weapons-free world. Dr. Mtonga spoke about nuclear abolition from both an African and a global perspective, highlighting the fact that the entire continent is already a nuclear-weapons-free zone under the Treaty of Pelindaba; ICAN Europe Senior Campaigner Arielle Denis gave an overview of ICAN strategies and goals; and Nigerian medical student Homsuk Swomen presented IPPNW's findings about nuclear famine and how global climate disruption from even a limited nuclear war in another part of the world could have catastrophic effects on agriculture and access to food in Africa.

A Target X installation in the streets of Livingstone drew so much attention on the opening day of the conference that a second event was organized for later in the week and was covered by Zambian national television, which also interviewed Ms. Denis. At an IPPNW African Regional Meeting held in conjunction with the Safe Communities Conference, affiliates discussed a number of ways to make ICAN and nuclear abolition an ongoing part of their work, including approaching African celebrities to endorse the campaign and to speak out on behalf of a nuclear-weapons-free world.

Original > <http://www.icanw.org/node/5704> ■



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From Fukushima to disarmament

By Malcolm Fraser *

5 July 2011 - Months after the devastating March 11 earthquake and tsunami hit Japan, the ongoing nuclear disaster at Fukushima compounds the humanitarian tragedy and impedes recovery. The damaged reactors and spent-fuel ponds contain around ten times as much nuclear fuel as did the Chernobyl reactor that exploded in 1986. In three reactors, the fuel has melted, almost certainly through the reactor vessels; primary containment structures have been breached; explosions have torn away the secondary containment (the buildings); radioactive releases continue; and closed-loop cooling has not been re-established.

More than 100,000 tons of highly radioactive wastewater now flood the facility to capacity, as water continues to be poured in to prevent further massive radioactive emissions. The spent fuel in pools adjacent to each reactor, containing more radioactivity than the reactors themselves, has also been severely damaged, has leaked radioactivity, and is still without needed stable cooling. The spent fuel at the Reactor 4 caused a hydrogen explosion and fire on March 15.

As a result, large amounts of radiation, on a scale comparable to Chernobyl, have already been released into the air, earth, and ocean. Further releases will continue, probably for years.

And yet, while the Fukushima disaster is attracting overdue global attention to nuclear safety and security, and provoking a reconsideration of nuclear power, its implications for nuclear weapons remain largely unremarked. The nuclear reactions that drive reactors and weapons are the same, as are the radioactive products that are dispersed by wind, rain, and water if released, with the same lack of respect for borders and the same indiscriminate long-term cancer and genetic hazards.

At Fukushima, a perfect storm – a massive earthquake and tsunami, multiple vulnerable coastal reactors with spent-fuel ponds in the same buildings, inadequate barriers, loss of power, and back-up generators situated too low – may have seemed a remote possibility. But was it really? Problems had occurred at similar reactors before. Fukushima's operator, Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), had a poor safety culture and a long history of falsifying and covering up inspection and safety data.

No nuclear reactors are designed to withstand an earthquake of magnitude 8.0. Yet there were 11 earthquakes greater than 8.5 last century, and only 11 years into this century, there have been five. Almost all were followed by tsunamis. The seawall at Fukushima was designed for a tsunami no higher than 5.7 meters. Yet the same coast was devastated by a 38-meter tsunami in 1896, and again by a 29-meter tsunami in 1933.

Moreover, no nuclear reactors are built to withstand an attack like that of September 11, 2001 – which was also unforeseen. The aircraft that crashed in a Pennsylvania field was, it should be recalled, less than ten minutes away from the Three Mile Island nuclear plant.

Fukushima has highlighted how vulnerable spent-fuel ponds are to direct damage or disruption of power, water, or pumps for cooling. These pools contain vast amounts of long-lived radioactivity, typically in a simple building, without multiple engineered layers of containment. Each of the world's 437 nuclear power reactors and associated spent-fuel ponds are effectively enormous pre-positioned radiological weapons, or "dirty bombs."

Moreover, the world is wired with 22,400 nuclear weapons. Around 1,770 of them in Russia and the US, and a further 64 in France and 48 in the United Kingdom, remain on high alert, ready to be launched in response to a perceived attack with only minutes for verification and decision. Recent history is peppered with a litany of false alerts and near misses, each unforeseen, each a combination of technical and human failure. The growing potential for a nuclear disaster by cyber attack adds to the existential danger. ➔

* Malcolm Fraser is a former prime minister of Australia.



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We now know that just 100 relatively “small” Hiroshima-size nuclear weapons, less than one-thousandth of the global nuclear arsenal, could lift millions of tons of dark smoke high into the atmosphere. There, it would abruptly cool and darken the planet, slashing rainfall and food production in successive years – and thus causing worldwide starvation on a scale never before witnessed. This could result from the arsenals of any of the ten currently nuclear-armed states, with the exception of North Korea.

Intent, miscalculation, technical failure, cyber attack, or accident could cause the nuclear escalation of a conflict between India and Pakistan, in the Middle East (embroiling Israel’s nuclear weapons), or on the Korean peninsula. Such outcomes are at least as plausible or likely – if not more so – than a massive earthquake and tsunami causing widespread damage to four Japanese nuclear reactors and their adjacent spent-fuel ponds.

Any country that can enrich uranium to fuel nuclear reactors has everything it needs to enrich uranium further, to weapons-grade strength. In a nuclear reactor, 1-2% of the uranium fuel is inevitably converted to plutonium. This can be separated through chemical processing and used to build a bomb, as Israel, India, and North Korea did – and as many fear that Iran is seeking to do.

Currently, there is no restriction on any country building a uranium-enrichment plant or reprocessing spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium. As we have seen, safeguards alone are not up to the job. We will not prevent further proliferation of nuclear weapons and their eventual use, much less achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, without strict international control of all uranium enrichment, and without banning the separation of plutonium from spent fuel.

That which cannot be controlled must be prevented. Today, that means preventing the threat of climate change and eradicating nuclear weapons. But we cannot afford efforts to address one challenge that end up aggravating the other. Attempting to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions through nuclear energy, thereby fueling the dangers of the ultimate global incendiary – nuclear war – could be the most tragic of all miscalculations. ■

US veers towards default as military spending grows

By Kate Hudson*

As the US experiences growing economic crisis – a deficit of \$1.4 trillion - and struggles to avoid a default, its massive spending on ‘defence’ – including nuclear weapons – seems hubristic beyond belief. New IMF boss Christine Lagarde is one of the many advocates of an increased debt ceiling for the US, stating that a failure to do so will negatively impact on the dollar and confidence in it as a reserve currency. President Obama himself backs an increase in public debt to sustain public spending but he currently faces opposition from many Republicans who want more government spending cuts instead.

In the light of this disastrous situation, the news that the US House of Representatives has approved £649 billion for military spending in 2012 is almost unbelievable. This is an increase of \$17 billion over current levels. But military budget cuts could surely be attractive to both sides in the economic and political debate? A cut in military spending would surely allow either for a reduction in public spending or allow for continued public spending on welfare, jobs and social needs.

Unfortunately, few in the US political establishment seem to have cottoned on to this idea. And nuclear weapons – in spite of Obama’s stated commitment to disarmament – are going to receive even more money. The US plans to increase its spending on nuclear weapons infrastructure by 21% at a cost of \$85 billion over the next decade. It is estimated that the full cost of the US nuclear arsenal is \$61.3 billion for 2011 alone. As the vast majority of the US population faces disastrous cuts in its living standards, with many facing unemployment homelessness and dire poverty, now more than ever it is clear that political elites need to reorder their priorities. And as the UK heads towards spending over £100 billion on Trident replacement, ours are no exception.

* Dr Kate Hudson has been General Secretary of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament since September 2010. Prior to this she served as the organisation's Chair from 2003. She is a leading anti-nuclear and anti-war campaigner nationally and internationally. She is also author of 'CND Now More than Ever: The Story of a Peace Movement'. ■



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Admiral Noel Gayler: Dispelling Nuclear Illusions

By David Krieger, President, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

Noel Gayler, a World War II Navy pilot who later rose to the rank of four-star admiral and served as Commander-in-Chief of the US Pacific Command in the 1970s, died on July 14 at the age of 96. Adm. Gayler was one of the most prominent US military leaders to publicly call for the abolition of nuclear weapons and put forward a proposal to achieve this goal.

Adm. Gayler's proposal, published in December 2000 by the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, presents a sober assessment of the dangers that nuclear weapons pose to humanity and calls for the total elimination of these weapons. His assessment was influenced by viewing Hiroshima from the air only six days after its devastation on August 6, 1945 by a US nuclear weapon. He also witnessed the atmospheric testing of thermonuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands in the 1960s.

In his proposal, Adm. Gayler dispels some common illusions concerning the military value of nuclear weapons. These include: physical defense against nuclear weapons is possible; nuclear weapons can be used in a sensible manner; nuclear disarmament imperils our security; and nuclear deterrence is an effective defense. "With these illusions dispelled," Adm. Gayler stated, "it becomes evident that nuclear disarmament works to the advantage of every power. Only in this way can the world be made safe from unprecedented murder and destruction."

The central thesis of Adm. Gayler's proposal is that US and global security would be vastly enhanced by the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The proposal states, "An irony is that in developing and using nuclear weapons, we, the United States, have done the only thing capable of threatening our own national security." Adm. Gayler's proposal involves the delivery of all nuclear weapons to a central point, where they would be irreversibly dismantled. Adm. Gayler's passing provides an appropriate moment to revisit his vision and proposal to achieve a nuclear weapon-free world. [July 21, 2011] ■

www.nuclearabolition.net

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