



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH SEPTEMBER 2011 ARTICLES

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UNITED NATIONS - History is strewn with proof of the destructive capabilities of nuclear weapons and power, yet science is also replete with evidence that nuclear power has many advantages. **Read more on page 2**

Politics Clouds Efforts to Ban Nuclear Testing

UNITED NATIONS - On Aug. 29, 1949, the Soviet Union conducted the first of 456 nuclear tests in Semipalatinsk in Eastern Kazakhstan, at the site where it ultimately held over two-thirds of all Soviet nuclear tests without warning inhabitants of the region of the impact of exposure to these tests. **Read more on page 3**

Civil Society Crucial to Ban Nuke Testing

TORONTO - Foreign ministers and senior officials from 160 countries have affirmed their commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) that bans all nuclear testing, and agreed to "encourage cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other elements of civil society". **Read more on page 5**

One Step Closer to Global Ban on Nuke Tests

BERLIN - Despite several hurdles yet to be overcome, the world has inched one step closer to entry into force of a global treaty banning all nuclear explosions everywhere, by everyone. The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) announced on September 20, 2011 that Guinea had become the 155th State to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). **Read more on page 7**

Make Nuclear Weapons the Target

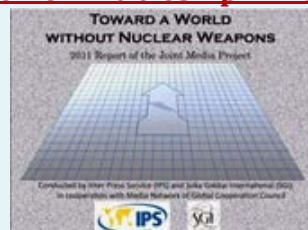
SYDNEY - It was 7am on a fateful day in 1953, 10-year-old Yami Lester and a group of Aboriginal children were playing with a toy truck, when they heard a loud bang intercepted with several small bangs as the ground beneath their small feet shook. **Read more on page 8**

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[http://www.nuclearabolition.net/documents/Toward a World without Nuclear Weapons.pdf](http://www.nuclearabolition.net/documents/Toward_a_World_without_Nuclear_Weapons.pdf)

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IPS Report

U.N. Meetings Push for Nuclear Safeguards and Test Bans

By Elizabeth Whitman

UNITED NATIONS, Sep 23, 2011 (IPS) - History is strewn with proof of the destructive capabilities of nuclear weapons and power, yet science is also replete with evidence that nuclear power has many advantages.

How to protect against the dangers of nuclear power while ensuring that humans can safely reap its benefits is an ongoing dilemma that leaders gathered to address in high-level meetings at the United Nations on September 22-23, 2011.

The accidents at Fukushima in the wake of an earthquake and tsunami in March of this year and at Chernobyl in 1986 "are a wake-up call", Ban said September 22 when he opened the summit on nuclear safety.

"The effects of nuclear accidents respect no borders," he said. He called for strong international consensus and safety standards "to adequately safeguard our people".

On September 23, over 40 ministers and high-level officials met to discuss the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which 182 countries have joined to date and 155 have ratified. Nine more countries need to ratify the treaty before it can enter into force, including the United States.

Discussions centred on implications of the accident at the Fukushima nuclear plant, which have retrospectively underscored the urgent need for the international community to intensify efforts to improve nuclear safety.

Indeed, recommendations did not operate on the basis that all states will cease to pursue nuclear activities.

Sergio Duarte, high representative for disarmament affairs, said in a ministerial session that while some states have decided to phase out or not to pursue nuclear energy, "other states remain committed to developing and acquiring nuclear power". As a result, disaster and risk analysis need to be further developed.

A system-wide study, which Ban presented September 22, on the implications of the incident, demonstrated the extent to which Fukushima remains on international radar, at least in terms of nuclear safety.

It examined both the pros and cons of nuclear energy, pointing out, "Safe and scientifically sound nuclear technologies... are valuable tools for agriculture and food production."

Nevertheless, an accident releasing radioactive material into the surrounding environment leads to serious "contamination of water, agriculture" and other areas and has "direct implications on the livelihoods of people".

"The principal lesson of the Fukushima accident is that assumptions made concerning which types of accident were possible or likely were too modest," the study said. "In order to properly address nuclear security, the international community should promote universal adherence to and implementation of relevant international legal instruments."

Entry into force: the CTBT

CTBT is one of those international legal instruments. The observational technology of its International Monitoring System is widely considered valuable and effective at detecting potential violations of the treaty. Its detection capabilities might also prove useful in the event of a nuclear emergency.

In 1996, the CTBT opened for signature. Ban set 2012 as a target year for it to enter into force, but first, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the U.S. must ratify the treaty.

Entry into force of the CTBT has multiple benefits, leaders said. ➞



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It is an "indispensable stepping stone to a nuclear weapon free world", Ban said during a ministerial meeting Friday. He urged remaining states to sign and ratify the CTBT "without further delay".

The German foreign minister, Guido Westerwelle, noted that not only would the entry into force help regional tensions such as in the Middle East and East Asia, but would also "strengthen global peace and security".

Until the treaty enters into force, however, ratification remains the outstanding challenge.

"These are national decisions," Tibor Tóth, the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), told IPS, in reference to whether the nine remaining countries ratify the CTBT. "Countries will have to assess for themselves whether they feel that with this treaty they have a safety net below."

Especially in the Middle East and South Asia, "it's important that... countries see this treaty as one of the important assets to achieve more security," he added. Furthermore, "beyond the political security benefits, there is a wider benefit as well on mitigating complex disasters," he stated.

Duarte, who heads the UN Disarmament Office, agreed. "The decision about whether countries want to add nuclear sources to their energy mix or not is a sovereign decision," he said in an interview with IPS. All the U.N. can do, he affirmed, is "promote the treaty and show to (countries) benefits that will accrue from their participation" in CTBT.

The U.N. can convene meetings, pool knowledge and resources, and share ideas. It can arm member states with the knowledge necessary to prevent or deal with nuclear accidents, and it can try to develop frameworks and treaties to the same effect. But ultimately, member states are the ones who implement practices or ratify treaties.

"It's up to them to decide what they want to do," Duarte said. ☑

Politics Clouds Efforts to Ban Nuclear Testing

By Elizabeth Whitman

UNITED NATIONS, Sep 5, 2011 (IPS) - On Aug. 29, 1949, the Soviet Union conducted the first of 456 nuclear tests in Semipalatinsk in Eastern Kazakhstan, at the site where it ultimately held over two-thirds of all Soviet nuclear tests without warning inhabitants of the region of the impact of exposure to these tests.

On Aug. 29, 1949, the Soviet Union conducted the first of 456 nuclear tests in Semipalatinsk in Eastern Kazakhstan, at the site where it ultimately held over two-thirds of all Soviet nuclear tests without warning inhabitants of the region of the impact of exposure to these tests.

On Aug. 29, 1991 the site closed, yet the devastating health and environmental effects continue to plague the region to this day. With Aug. 29, 2011 marking the 20th anniversary closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and the second International Day Against Nuclear Tests, world leaders and U.N. officials gathered to discuss the issue of nuclear testing. They convened in a high level workshop on Sep. 1 and an informal meeting of the General Assembly on Sep. 2.

In the wide array of views and concepts presented in these gatherings, however, consensus seemed clear on only one point: the fact that efforts to ban nuclear testing and indeed, to entirely eliminate nuclear weapons around the world, are clouded with political overtones and motives.

Meanwhile, states with nuclear weapons continue to depend upon those capabilities for strength and influence in areas of international security and relations, and politics overshadow the fact that nuclear testing poses serious hazards to human and environmental health and nuclear weapons have the ability to destroy the planet. ☹



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In Semipalatinsk, for instance, the death rate is extremely high and the rate of cancerous diseases there is at critical levels. Serious birth defects are common, with incidences of mental retardation three to five times higher than average, and the average life expectancy is less than 50 years.

"No one can say what will be the results after one, or two, or three generations" of living in a region contaminated by four decades of nuclear testing, Ermek Kosherbayev, deputy governor of East Kazakhstan, which contains the Semipalatinsk region, told IPS.

The government there continues efforts to assist people with their traditional livelihood of agriculture, yet doing so is not only difficult but also dangerous when the very dirt and water can be tainted by radiation. Perhaps because its people understand firsthand the horrors of living with the effects of nuclear testing, Kazakhstan has fully supported efforts to ban nuclear testing and nuclear weaponry, and has given up its nuclear arsenal. The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) went into effect in 1970, during the middle of the Cold War, when concepts of security were driven by the idea of nuclear deterrence - that if a state possessed nuclear weapons, it would not be attacked.

Today, 189 states are party to the treaty, with five of them possessing nuclear weapons. Those countries are China, France, Russia, Britain and the United States. Three states - India, Israel and Pakistan - are not party to the treaty, although India and Pakistan have declared that they possess nuclear weapons and Israel has undeclared but widely acknowledged nuclear capabilities. North Korea withdrew from the treaty in 2003.

A Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) was approved in 1996 but is not in force, and this week, officials stressed the importance of implementing the CTBT and its obligations. Joseph Deiss, president of the 65th General Assembly, stated Sep. 2, "The current international moratorium on nuclear tests, respected by almost all states, is not a substitute for the full implementation" of the CTBT.

In a high-level workshop on Sep. 1, participants noted that implementation of the CTBT was a long overdue and crucial step towards global nuclear disarmament, especially since most countries have agreed that nuclear testing is no longer useful. Rather, suggested Annika Thunborg, representative of the executive secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT, keeping open the option of nuclear testing is a status symbol for countries.

Committing to nuclear disarmament, or to a ban on nuclear testing, often ends up being more about power than about nuclear weapons themselves, participants of the workshop noted. Several of those who commented suggested that weapons played perhaps a symbolic role, and that those who did not want to see progress in non-proliferation could block progress.

Another issue in non-proliferation and test ban talks was the preoccupation with which states possessed nuclear weapons and whether they were categorised as good or bad states, rather than the acknowledgement that nuclear weapons are inherently dangerous, no matter who possesses them.

In addition, "the concept of deterrence does not work", said Libran Cabctulan, chair of the 2010 NPT Review Conference in Sep. 1 workshop, citing the fact that in the future, nuclear weapons users are more likely to be non-state actors rather than states. "Non-state actors have no return address," he added.

All in all, the fact that numerous preconditions and political concerns detracted from concrete progress and productive discussion was made quite clear. At the informal GA meeting on Sep. 2, Eshagh Al Habib, Iranian ambassador to the U.N., urged Israel, without naming the country, "to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under the IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency] full-scope safeguards." Yet Iran itself has come under fire for not cooperating with IAEA inspectors. The IAEA is an international body responsible for ensuring that nuclear capabilities are used for peaceful purposes.

At the same meeting, Enkhetsseg Ochir, Mongolian ambassador to the U.N., posed the question, "Are military and political considerations more important than the health and well-being of people?" They are not, she said emphatically.

For now, however, in efforts to end nuclear testing, those considerations do take priority. Whether that agenda will change remains to be seen. ☑



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Civil Society Crucial to Ban Nuke Testing

By J. C. Suresh

TORONTO, Sep 25 (IDN) - Foreign ministers and senior officials from 160 countries have affirmed their commitment to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) that bans all nuclear testing, and agreed to "encourage cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other elements of civil society".

They had gathered together at the United Nations for a Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT. Such cooperation would aim "to raise awareness of and support for the Treaty and its objectives, as well as the need for its early entry into force," the final declaration endorsed on September 23, 2011 in New York said.

The declaration appeals to holdout States to commit themselves at the highest political level to join the CTBT, urging "especially those whose signatures and ratifications are necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty, to take individual initiatives to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay in order to achieve its earliest entry into force." It refers to nine specific countries – China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States.

CTBT was opened for signature at the UN headquarters in New York on September 24, 1996. Since then, 182 States have signed and 155 States have ratified the Treaty, including 35 whose ratification is necessary for its entry into force.

Fifteen years later, the ratifying States, together with other States Signatories discussed "concrete measures to facilitate the entry into force of the CTBT at the earliest possible date, thus ridding the world once and for all of nuclear test explosions."

They declared: "The entry into force of the CTBT is of vital importance as a core element of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We reiterate that a universal and effectively verifiable Treaty constitutes a fundamental instrument in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation."

There is little expectation, though, that selected nations that must ratify the pact before it could be formally implemented – China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel and the United States – will all do so in the foreseeable future, writes Elaine M. Grossman of the Global Security Newswire. Three others – India, North Korea and Pakistan – must also sign and ratify the agreement for it to enter into force.

"This is a tough list," Michael Krepon, co-founder of the Henry L. Stimson Center, said of the nine holdout nations at an event on September 22 in Washington DC. "It will take a very long time before all of the states [required would] consent to ratify this treaty," he wrote in a blog post.

Even in Washington, which has upheld an informal moratorium on nuclear explosive tests since 1992, prospects are seen as dim that President Obama could get enough Senate Republicans on board to achieve the two-thirds majority necessary for ratification, particularly in the run-up to the 2012 elections.

Obama has championed the accord but has not indicated when he plans to submit it to the Senate for ratification, writes Grossman, and adds:

Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association, expressed confidence that some of the key nations would consider ratification once China and the United States acted to do so. He did not forecast that Beijing or Washington would act anytime soon on the matter, though.

"The treaty's tortured entry-into-force provision was the handiwork of China, Russia and France, whose leaders felt obligated to sign, but remained reluctant to end nuclear testing permanently," Krepon wrote in his blog. "They resolved this conundrum by giving other recalcitrant states vetoes over the treaty's entry into force." ↻



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Even though the treaty itself could remain hamstrung into the future, Krepon and Kimball said they think making the CTBT Preparatory Commission and Provisional Technical Secretariat permanent could offer the international regime against nuclear explosive tests a symbolically important boost.

The CTBT Preparatory Commission – or, more formally, the 'Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Organization' – operates facilities in more than 70 countries and employs a staff numbering 260 or so. The commission's role is to promote the treaty and create a verification regime that would be ready to operate once the agreement enters into force. The Provisional Technical Secretariat provides assistance to the commission, including managing an International Monitoring System and an International Data Center that analyzes incoming data.

With roughly \$120 million in annual international funding, the CTBT headquarters has completed roughly 80 percent of the global monitoring system's construction, including more than 250 monitoring stations and 10 laboratories. It has already succeeded in detecting seismic activity that might otherwise have gone unnoticed, including a very low-yield North Korean test in October 2006, according to Krepon and other nuclear experts, reports Grossman.

The 1996 agreement would ban all nuclear explosions, whether for military or peaceful purposes. Because it has not yet entered into force, the organizations created to promote the agreement and build its verification regime were labeled temporary from the outset. "We propose to eliminate [the] words 'provisional' and 'preparatory' from the letterheads" of CTBT-related institutions and from international "lexicon," said Krepon.

The idea would be to help preserve the benefits offered by the Vienna, Austria-based CTBT Organization's international seismic monitoring and radiation detection services, Krepon added. The treaty organization also plays a role in detecting and warning nations about incoming tsunamis.

The September 23 final declaration reaffirmed their determination of ratifying States, together with other States Signatories, to take concrete steps towards early entry into force and universalization of the Treaty and to this end adopted the following measures, which would involve cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other representatives of the civil society:

- Encourage the organization of regional seminars in conjunction with other regional meetings in order to increase the awareness of the important role that the Treaty plays;
- Call upon the CTBTO Preparatory Commission to continue its international cooperation activities and the organizing of workshops, seminars and training programmes in the legal and technical fields;
- Call upon the Preparatory Commission "to continue promoting understanding of the Treaty, including through education and training initiatives, and demonstrating, on a provisional basis, and bearing in mind the purpose and specific mandates as foreseen in the Treaty, the benefits of the civil and scientific applications of the verification technologies, inter alia, in such areas as the environment, earth science and technology, tsunami warning systems, detection of the accidental release of radioactive particulates and gases, and possibly other disaster alert systems";
- Request that the Provisional Technical Secretariat continue to provide States with legal assistance with respect to the ratification process and implementation measures and, in order to enhance these activities and their visibility, maintain a contact point for the exchange and dissemination of relevant information and documentation;
- Request the Provisional Technical Secretariat to continue to act as a 'focal point' for collecting information on outreach activities undertaken by ratifying States and States Signatories, and to maintain an updated overview of the information based on inputs provided by ratifying States and States Signatories for this purpose on its public web site, thereby assisting in promoting the entry into force of the Treaty;

Significantly, the UN Conference was open to civil society organizations, and 12 of them indeed took part: Arms Control Association (ACA); Carnegie Endowment for International Peace; Christian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Kenya; Global Security Institute (GSI); International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALA); International Human Rights Observer (IHRO); Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT); Partnership for Global Justice; Pax Christi International; The World Association of Former United Nations Interns and Fellows; United Nations Association of New York; and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). ☑



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One Step Closer to Global Ban on Nuke Tests

By Eva Weiler

BERLIN Sep 20 (IDN) - Despite several hurdles yet to be overcome, the world has inched one step closer to entry into force of a global treaty banning all nuclear explosions everywhere, by everyone. The Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) announced on September 20, 2011 that Guinea had become the 155th State to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Though a poor country, Guinea has abundant natural resources including 25 per cent or more of the world's known bauxite reserves. The West African country with a population of some 10 million also has diamonds, gold, and other metals.

The country has great potential for hydroelectric power. Bauxite and alumina are currently the only major exports. Other industries include processing plants for beer, juices, soft drinks and tobacco. Agriculture employs 80 per cent of the nation's labor force. Under French rule, and at the beginning of independence, Guinea was a major exporter of bananas, pineapples, coffee, peanuts, and palm oil.



Tibor Tóth, the CTBTO Executive Secretary, hailed the ratification as "a step that further consolidates Africa's dedication to end nuclear testing and acts as a powerful beacon for the rest of the world."

The backdrop to this remark is that the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (ANWFZ) was established with the coming into effect of the Treaty of Pelindaba on July 15, 2009. The Treaty is named after Pelindaba, South Africa's main Nuclear Research Centre, run by the South African Nuclear Energy Corporation. It was the location where South Africa's atomic bombs of the 1970s were developed, constructed and subsequently stored. It is situated approximately 33km west of Pretoria.

The Vienna-based CTBTO has launched a campaign to 'Close the Door on Nuclear Testing!' It argues: "Today it's hard to imagine that nuclear bombs exploded all the time in the 1950s, 60s, 70s and 80s. Yet more than 2,000 nuclear bombs were tested all over the world, contaminating the land and air and affecting people everywhere. "In 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty put the brakes on this madness. But until all the countries of the world support the Treaty, the threat of further testing and a renewed nuclear arms race looms over us all."

According to the CTBTO, adherence to CTBT is almost universal, with 182 States having signed the Treaty to date; and 155 of them, including the West African state of Guinea, have ratified. In Africa, only two countries have yet to sign the CTBT – Mauritius and Somalia – whereas 11 countries have yet to ratify: Angola, Chad, Comoros, Congo (Republic of), Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland and Zimbabwe.

"Among these, ratification by Egypt is mandatory for the Treaty to enter into force. Ratifications by eight other nuclear technology holder countries are also outstanding and necessary for entry into force: China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States," the CTBTO stated.

"It is building an International Monitoring System (IMS) to make sure that no nuclear explosion goes undetected. There are currently over 280 facilities in 85 countries including 30 in 22 African States. The data registered by the IMS can also be used for disaster mitigation such as earthquake monitoring, tsunami warning, and the tracking of the levels and dispersal of radioactivity from nuclear accidents," the CTBTO said. In 1999, there were no certified IMS stations or facilities in place.

African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone

ANWFZ includes the territory of the continent of Africa, island states that are members of African Union (AU), and all islands considered by its predecessor, Organization of African Unity (OAU) in its resolutions to be part of Africa. "Territory" means the land territory, internal waters, territorial seas and archipelagic waters and the airspace above them as well as the seabed and subsoil beneath. ➡



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The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone covers the entire African continent as well as the following islands: Agalega Island, Bassas da India, Canary Islands, Cape Verde, Cargados Carajos Shoals, Chagos Archipelago - Diego Garcia, Comoros, Europa Island, Juan de Nova, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mayotte, Prince Edward & Marion Islands, São Tomé and Príncipe, Réunion, Rodrigues Island, Seychelles, Tromelin Island, and Zanzibar and Pemba Islands.

This list does not mention the mid-ocean islands of St. Helena 1,900 km west from southern Angola or its dependencies including Ascension Island and Tristan da Cunha, Bouvet Island 2,500 km southwest from Cape Town, the Crozet Islands 2,350 km south of Madagascar, Kerguelen, or Île Amsterdam and Île Saint-Paul, which are the only Southern Hemisphere lands not in any of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones.

The African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty prohibits the research, development, manufacture, stockpiling, acquisition, testing, possession, control or stationing of nuclear explosive devices in the territory of parties to the Treaty and the dumping of radioactive wastes in the African zone by Treaty parties.

The Treaty also forbids any attack against nuclear installations in the zone by Treaty parties and requires them to maintain the highest standards of physical protection of nuclear material, facilities and equipment, which are to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes.

The quest for a nuclear free Africa began when the OAU formally stated its desire for a Treaty ensuring the denuclearization of Africa at its first Summit in Cairo in July 1964. The Treaty was opened for signature on April 11, 1996 in Cairo, Egypt.

The CTBT observed on August 29, 2011 the twentieth anniversary of the closure of the nuclear weapons test site at Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. The selection of that date in 1991 was made because this was when the now defunct Soviet Union conducted its first nuclear test at the site in 1949.

Over 2000 nuclear tests were carried out between 1945 and 1996 when the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was opened for signature, most by the United States and the Soviet Union, but also by Britain, France and China. Three countries have tested nuclear weapons since 1996: India, Pakistan, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The vital importance of the Treaty's overdue entry into force was reaffirmed at the May 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and included in the agreed action plan. The Treaty's verification regime has proven to be a valuable instrument for international cooperation, said UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, adding: "I am fully confident of its future ability to provide an independent, reliable and cost-effective means of verifying – and therefore, deterring – any violation of the Treaty's provisions." ☑

Make Nuclear Weapons the Target

By Neena Bhandari

SYDNEY (IDN) - It was 7am on a fateful day in 1953, 10-year-old Yami Lester and a group of Aboriginal children were playing with a toy truck, when they heard a loud bang intercepted with several small bangs as the ground beneath their small feet shook.

"We saw a shiny black cloud coming from the south, moving above and through the trees, which spread across 70 miles. We shut our eyes as they began to burn. In the days that followed, about 50 Yankunytjatjara people in Walatina began to complain of skin rashes, sore eyes, vomiting, diarrhoea and coughing. There was no treatment on the cattle station. The closest health clinic was hundreds of miles away and we had no transport," says Yami Lester, who was living 160 km from Emu Junction in South Australia, the site of the first nuclear test on mainland Australia.

Lester managed to open his eyes after three weeks, but couldn't see anything with his right eye. The left eye, he reckons had about 70 per cent sight. By February 1957, he was totally blind and now he is confined to a wheelchair following a stroke last year. ➡



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An advocate for nuclear abolition, Lester has thrown his weight behind the Australian Red Cross' recently launched 'Make Nuclear Weapons the Target' campaign. He says, "When the British and Australian Governments conducted the tests at Emu Junction, and later at Maralinga over half a century ago, we were unaware of the life-long damage it would cause to our people and homeland. This campaign will educate indigenous people and make Australians aware of the damage nuclear weapons can do and why there is an urgency to get rid of them."

Make Nuclear Weapons the Target campaign, which kicked off on August 6, 2011 with a major referendum on Facebook, highlights the humanitarian and environmental imperatives for nuclear disarmament. It is calling on all Australians, especially the young generation, to finish what their parents started.

"The anti-nuclear debate defined a generation in the 1960s and 1970s, but fizzled out before real change was cemented. In 2011 nuclear weapons are an even bigger threat than ever. It's time for Baby Boomers to reconnect with the cause and a whole new generation to get involved," says Australian Red Cross CEO, Robert Tickner.

In June, the prestigious Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) stated in a report: "More than 5,000 nuclear weapons are deployed and ready for use, including nearly 2,000 that are kept in a high state of alert.". Worldwide today there are at least 20,000 nuclear weapons in existence with a destructive force estimated to be 150,000 times that of the Hiroshima bomb.

"What we are seeing is the proliferation of nuclear weapons to new countries, the risk of non-state actors getting nuclear weapons and the threat of accidental firing of these weapons giving rise to a conflict. Our campaign aims to promote public awareness on these issues within Australia. We would like to see some form of international convention that declares the use of nuclear weapons to be prohibited under the International Humanitarian Law (IHL)," adds Tickner.

The Red Cross mandate in the IHL, which prohibits use of weapons or methods of warfare that do not distinguish between civilians and combatants, makes it a leading voice in calling for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Australia, along with 194 nations, has ratified the four Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, the universal rules of war.

As Australian Red Cross' Head of International Law and Principles, Dr Helen Durham says, "From the legal point of view it doesn't make sense that we as humans have in our powers, across the world, the capacity to use weapons that don't distinguish between civilians and combatants and cause incredibly unacceptable suffering not just to humans, but also to the environment and a whole range of infrastructure. So there are real legal imperatives for the world to work in a more focused way on nuclear disarmament".

Likening the international community to a pilot "asleep at the controls of a fast-moving aircraft", former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan, had criticised the lack of a unified, global strategy for disarmament and non-proliferation as the main reason that nuclear weapons still threaten humanity.

Australia is in an interesting situation because as a country it doesn't have any nuclear weapons although it does have arrangements in place in relation to defence with the United States. The country also has nearly half of the world's commercially-recoverable uranium, and the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics forecasts that Australia's uranium exports may reach a little over 17,000 tonnes within five years. ➡



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"Australia must introduce steps to ensure that any exported uranium is used solely for peaceful purposes, such as energy generation and medical usage," says Dr Emily Crawford, Postdoctoral Fellow at the Faculty of Law, University of Sydney.

The Australian Red Cross has written to all members of the Australian Parliament seeking support for a convention to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons. "We are very confident and optimistic that we will get that support. We believe this is an absolutely fundamental international humanitarian issue falling squarely within our mandate and that is why we are happy to take this initiative into the public domain and seek support from parliamentarians, the government and the wider community," says Tickner.



The campaign, which is designed to reignite national and international debate on the issue, has 96 per cent of the people voting online to ban the use of nuclear weapons. Use of social media has proved a vital and useful tool in getting this important message across, especially to the younger generation.

Peter Giugni, International Humanitarian Law (IHL) officer, has been organizing events and seminars on the campaign in regional New South Wales. He says, "People are disappointed that the international community

still hasn't resolved to prohibit these weapons against humanity and they are very supportive of Australian Red Cross speaking out."

The campaign will build to a climax in November with more awareness events and public forums planned for the New Year. As Dr Durham says, "Countries around the world, wherever they are, need to understand that their citizens are concerned about this topic. It is really about everyone standing up and saying these weapons are unacceptable. The Australian Red Cross is taking the lead towards an international meeting in November in Geneva, where all Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies from across the world will meet with the desire to create a global Red Cross Red Crescent policy on nuclear weapons."

In 1950 the International Committee of the Red Cross publicly called on States to take all steps to come to agreement on the prohibition of atomic weapons; there have been numerous efforts to make the use of nuclear weapons illegal but, 66 years on, tangible change still has not been achieved.

"The advocacy of the Australian Red Cross is very welcome. It will help to establish even more strongly that the abolition of nuclear weapons is an essential goal for humanitarian reasons. This is not about politics, but human welfare and survival," says Dr Sue Wareham, Board Member, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) Australia. .☑

Photo: Australian Red Cross CEO Tickner with Lester | Credit: Peter Giugni



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Translations | Adaptations

U.N. Meetings Push for Nuclear Safeguards and Test Bans

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=510:un-meetings-push-for-nuclear-safeguards-and-test-bans-japanese&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

Politics Clouds Efforts to Ban Nuclear Testing

ARABIC

<http://www.ipsinternational.org/arabic/nota.asp?idnews=2259>

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=488:politics-clouds&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

Civil Society Crucial to Ban Nuke Testing

GERMAN

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=500:unterstuetzung-der-zivilgesellschaft-im-kampf-gegen-atomtests-gefragt-&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=508:civil-society-crucial-to-ban-nuke-testing-&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

One Step Closer to Global Ban on Nuke Tests

CHINESE SIM

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=498:one-step-closer-to-global-ban-on-nuke-tests-chinese-sim&catid=14:chinese-hindi-urdu-persian&Itemid=15

CHINESE TRA

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=499:one-step-closer-to-global-ban-on-nuke-tests-chinese-tra&catid=14:chinese-hindi-urdu-persian&Itemid=15

ITALIAN

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=502:un-nuovo-passo-avanti-verso-la-totale-messa-al-bando-dei-test-nucleari&catid=7:italian&Itemid=8

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=504:one-step-closer-to-global-ban-on-nuke-tests-japanese&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

SPANISH

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=501:un-paso-mas-hacia-la-prohibicion-mundial-de-los-ensayos-nucleares&catid=10:spanish&Itemid=11

Make Nuclear Weapons the Target

ARABIC > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=506:make-nuclear-weapons-the-target-arabic&catid=3:arabic&Itemid=4

GERMAN > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=485:atomwaffen-unter-beschuss-in-australien&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

ITALIAN > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=493:metti-le-armi&catid=7:italian&Itemid=8

JAPANESE > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=490:make-nuclear-weapons&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

SPANISH > http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=494:haz-que-las-armas&catid=10:spanish&Itemid=11

TURKISH

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=484:hedefe-nuekleer-silahlar-koyalm&catid=4:turkish&Itemid=5



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What Others Say

CTBT Needs to be in Force to Free the World of Nuclear Weapons

By CTBTO

On the eve of the 15th anniversary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) opening for signature, world leaders affirmed their commitment to the Treaty. They recognized that the CTBT had established an international norm against nuclear testing which needed to become international law. [Read also Urgent calls by international leaders to bring test ban treaty in force]

Foreign ministers and high-level representatives from ratifying States participated in the conference. There were also a number of representatives of States Signatories including China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel and the United States as well as Pakistan as a non-signatory State.

States considered the CTBT an important element of the international security architecture and a crucial instrument for moving towards a world free of nuclear weapons. It was stressed that the entry into force of the CTBT was long overdue. States were united in their calls to those that had not done so to sign and ratify the Treaty. Urgent appeals were made particularly to nuclear technology holder States – the so-called Annex 2 States – whose signature and ratification is needed for the Treaty's entry into force to sign and ratify it.

U.S. Treaty ratification to encourage others

As one of those States, the United States was considered to have an important leadership role to play in bringing the Treaty in force. As stressed by Eamon Gilmore, Foreign Minister of Ireland, "ratification by the United States would encourage ratifications by others." The other States whose ratification is needed to make the CTBT an international legal norm against nuclear testing are China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, North Korea and Pakistan.

Ellen Tauscher, U.S. Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, declared that "the US is committed to the CTBT and we intend to see it enter into force...But we cannot do it alone," she said and called on the remaining Annex 2 States to "join us in moving towards ratification."

Indonesia working on early ratification of CTBT

Marty Natalegawa, Foreign Minister of Indonesia, reiterated his country's ongoing strong commitment to the Treaty. Natalegawa announced Indonesia's impending ratification of the CTBT in April 2010. He said that Indonesia's government and parliament were working together for early ratification of the Treaty. "It is our expectation that the process of ratification in Indonesia will encourage other countries, particularly those in Annex 2, to also start their own ratification processes," Natalegawa said.

Ratification by nuclear weapons States essential

According to Alistair Burt, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State of the United Kingdom, ratification by all "recognized nuclear weapon States (under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty)" would be an essential step towards entry into force of the CTBT. Burt said that prospects for ratification by the United States were encouraging and urged China to follow suit.

High time for action

Welcoming the repeatedly reiterated intentions of the United States and Indonesia to move towards ratification, Sergey Ryabkov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia, said that "it is high time to translate words into actions." He extended his call to all other States whose ratification of the Treaty is essential for its entry into force. ➡



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Moratoria on testing must be maintained

Pending the entry into force of the CTBT, “moratoria on nuclear weapon test explosions and any other nuclear explosions must be maintained,” said Jacek Najder, Under-Secretary of State of Poland, speaking on behalf of the European Union. At the same time, States stressed that nuclear test moratoria were not sufficient and could not serve as an alternative to a legally binding test ban treaty.

Additional ratifiers sent message to hold-out States

States acknowledged that – with 182 signatures and 155 ratifications – the CTBT enjoys universal support. Congratulations were extended to Ghana and Guinea for having recently ratified the Treaty. “Every additional ratifier sends a message to those yet to ratify – this global movement is growing and you should join it,” said Kevin Rudd, Foreign Minister of Australia.

Mobilize all stakeholders

Despite the impressive progress towards Treaty universality, States agreed to redouble efforts to achieve the outstanding signatures and ratifications for the CTBT’s entry into force. Kairat Umarov, Deputy Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan, proposed that States “mobilize all other stakeholders, such as media, civil society and ‘public diplomacy’ to convince governments of States that have not yet joined or ratified the Treaty, to do so in the near future.”

Significant investments in build-up of CTBT verification regime

States unanimously commended the progress in establishing the CTBT verification regime that is designed to monitor the entire globe to ensure that no nuclear explosion goes undetected. More than 85% of all monitoring facilities are already operational. The significant investments made in its build-up are seen by States as “a manifestation of their strong political support and commitment to the Treaty,” stated Libran Cabactulan, Permanent Representative of the Philippines and President of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

CTBT monitoring data for disaster prevention and emergency response

Many speakers welcomed the CTBTO’s contribution following the triple disaster in Japan in March 2011. They affirmed that it showed the value of monitoring data for civil and scientific purposes, and in particular for disaster prevention and mitigation. The CTBTO provided monitoring data to the Japanese Tsunami Warning Centre and shared information on the dispersion of radioactivity in the atmosphere with Member States and international organizations.

Reflecting on the usefulness of CTBTO data, Uri Rosenthal, Foreign Minister of the Netherlands, said: “We should explore the scope for expanding civilian use of the monitoring system in other areas of early warning and emergency response.”

NGOs urge Annex 2 States’ leaders to act on CTBT

The conference ended with a powerful statement by Togzhan Kassenova from the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace on behalf of 36 non-governmental organizations from around the world. “Actions speak louder than words,” Kassenova said and called upon every State at the conference to act. She particularly addressed the United States and China as well as other Annex 2 States. “While U.S. action on the Treaty is essential, other Annex 2 States must provide leadership rather than simply remain on the sidelines on the CTBT. In particular, it is time for China’s leaders to finally act on the CTBT.”



Original release: <http://www.ctbto.org/press-centre/press-releases/2011/ctbt-needs-to-be-in-force-to-free-the-world-of-nuclear-weapons/>



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UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs' Sergio Duarte's Statement to the First Committee of the General Assembly on Oct 3, 2011

I welcome this opportunity to address the Committee and am especially pleased to welcome those members of delegations who are joining us for the first time. . . . By any measure, this Committee has on its agenda some of the most difficult challenges for international peace and security. Its deliberations will cover the world's deadliest weapons of mass destruction, including the most indiscriminate of all, nuclear weapons. It will address issues relating to the regulation and limitation of conventional arms. And it will take up other subjects that have profound implications for our common future—including space weapons, the relationship between disarmament and development, disarmament education, regional cooperation, and issues relating to institutions in the United Nations disarmament machinery.

We are all familiar with the extent that progress in disarmament depends on its broader political climate. Some have argued that this political climate alone determines both the rate of progress and its future prospects. There is some truth in this, but opinions differ over which trends are producing which results, and many are not convinced that the environment determines disarmament outcomes, and not the other way around.

Some claim, for example, that if there is no peace or stability, if armed conflicts continue, if regional disputes remain unresolved, and if risks of weapons proliferation or terrorism persist—then under such circumstances, there can be no disarmament.

If this argument were true, one might conclude that this Committee would be well advised to adjourn today, because all our work would be held hostage to developments occurring outside the walls of this chamber. Our role would amount to little more than to echo those trends.

Yet there is another view of the role of this Committee that I believe has been more widely accepted over its last sixty-five years. This view holds that the Committee has the capability to make its own independent contribution to advancing multilateral norms in disarmament and, thereby, to strengthening international peace and security. This Committee did not halt its work even during the darkest years of the Cold War, when nuclear arsenals were growing and threats of nuclear war were not uncommon and widely recognized as such—so much so, they became the subject of popular novels and films.

Let us recall that most of the multilateral treaties that currently exist were negotiated during a geopolitical era marked by arms races, regional wars, and an intense multidimensional rivalry between the world's two great Superpowers. How could this have been possible if progress in disarmament had first to satisfy the preconditions of world peace and stability?

Today, we are fortunate to be conducting our deliberations in a substantially improved political climate. The Cold War has now been over for an entire generation. While over 20,000 nuclear weapons remain—and their operational status is unclear—the size of those arsenals has fallen considerably since their estimated peak of over 70,000 around 1986. More impressively, popular attitudes towards such weapons have also been changing in recent decades. In particular, the humanitarian consequences of the use of these weapons have been receiving greater recognition—as reflected in the 1996 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, in statements and work of the International Committee of the Red Cross, and most recently in language adopted by consensus in the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Equally impressive has been the increasing variety of actors who are working around the world for global nuclear disarmament, and this includes an active role by the Secretary-General, who last year became the first Secretary-General to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Last March, I was proud to join him in opening a new display at the UN's Disarmament Exhibit showing twin stacks of a petition for a nuclear weapons convention—that petition had over a million signatures collected by Mayors for Peace, an organization representing over 5000 cities in 151 countries. Another international petition, also in support of such a convention, was presented by the Japanese group Gensuikyo at the NPT Review Conference—and it had over 7 million signatures. ➔



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In addition to city mayors and grass-roots organizations, national parliamentarians have also been taking an increased interest in promoting progress in nuclear disarmament. In April 2009, the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union—representing 600 parliamentarians from over 100 countries—adopted a resolution that also supported negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention, as originally proposed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on 24 October 2008.

And in September 2009, the UN Security Council—after decades of not addressing this issue—held a summit meeting that produced Resolution 1887, which called upon all States, not just the parties to the NPT, to enter into good faith negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

As we consider these facts—while recognizing the uncertainties of the future—it is possible to observe two reinforcing trends that could positively influence the work of this Committee both this year and in the years ahead. The first is the trend associated with the democratic revolution now sweeping the world, not just the Middle East. Evidence that democracy is coming to disarmament is indisputable in the actions I have just cited by the mayors, parliamentarians, and civil society groups throughout the world. It is apparent in the persisting and growing expectations voiced in the General Assembly for new progress in disarmament—and as the world's largest democratic body, the General Assembly offers a forum for each State, large or small, to participate in the process of developing multilateral disarmament norms.

And as democracy is coming to disarmament, so too is the rule of law. This is apparent in the persisting efforts to gain universal membership in the key multilateral treaties dealing with weapons of mass destruction—the BWC, CWC, and NPT. It is apparent in strong and I believe growing interest in support of negotiating a nuclear weapons convention, or at least for serious consideration of what types of legal obligations would be necessary to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. It is apparent in recent meetings by the nuclear-weapon States to consult on ways to improve transparency of their nuclear arsenals and stocks of fissile materials, a longstanding goal of the world community.

It is apparent in the importance the entire world attaches to full compliance with disarmament and non-proliferation commitments. It is apparent in preparations to convene a conference next year to conclude an arms trade treaty, and in other efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space, to agree on norms governing missiles and missile defences, and to strengthen international legal obligations in the field of non-proliferation and against terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction. And it is apparent in efforts that have been underway since the 2010 NPT Review Conference to pursue the establishment of a WMD-free zone in the Middle East—and such efforts will hopefully produce progress quite soon.

These twin forces of democracy and the rule of law also have the potential to help in achieving another longstanding goal—namely, a reduction in military spending, or in the words of Article 26 of the Charter, “the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources.” At present the world is reportedly spending over \$1.6 trillion a year for military purposes, while progress in achieving many of the great Millennium Development Goals has fallen short of expectations given the lack of resources.

In terms of the work of this Committee, it is therefore quite clear that we should not close up shop and wait for the dawning of world peace as a precondition for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control to succeed. To the contrary, our efforts in each of these fields make their own vital and independent contributions in strengthening international peace and security. And as disarmament advances, the world advances.

Our efforts offer prospects for reducing mistrust in the world. Arms reductions can help not only in reducing regional tensions, but in eliminating the likelihood of large-scale armed conflicts. Far from affirming the legality or utility of nuclear weapons for national or collective self-defence, nuclear disarmament efforts satisfy both the law and the will of the people, while also enhancing security far more reliably than a precarious balance of nuclear terror.

For all these reasons, disarmament remains a goal shared by all Member States. What is most needed now is the political will to translate these goals into action. For this work to be undertaken on a global scale there is no substitute for the UN disarmament machinery as a venue for multilateral cooperation. It remains the world's great “assembly line” for the construction and maintenance of global disarmament norms. As the forces of democracy continue to grow, so too will the legitimacy of international rules in this field—and as the rule of law continues to come to disarmament, so too will the world welcome the additional stability, predictability, and basic fairness that will arise as a result. . . . ☑



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Civil Society's Perspective

International Day Against Nuclear Tests: Translating Words Into Action

September 2, 2011 | by IPPNW

Prepared Statement of Nongovernmental Organization Representative
Coordinated and Delivered by Daryl G. Kimball, Executive Director, Arms Control Association

On behalf of the many nongovernmental organizations with an interest in ending nuclear testing and achieving a nuclear weapons free world, I would like to thank the organizers of this year's meeting—including the office of the United Nations Secretary General and the Foreign Ministry of Kazakhstan—for granting NGOs a seat at this table.

It is important to recognize the pivotal role of nongovernmental organizations—and ordinary people the world over—in the long struggle to end nuclear testing.

For example, beginning in the 1950s, American pediatricians and civil society activists documented the presence of strontium-90 in the deciduous teeth of young children, prompting a large and effective public outcry against atmospheric nuclear testing. These protests had a direct impact on the negotiation and adoption of the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963.

In fact, civil society organizations have played a vital role in ensuring that the evidence compiled by physicians and scientists about the health and environmental consequences of nuclear test explosions—regardless of whether they are conducted in the atmosphere or aboveground—has consistently been put forward as an essential reason to ban testing permanently.

Nongovernmental organizations played a catalyzing role in more recent efforts to halt nuclear testing. Some twenty years ago, a popular movement in Soviet-controlled Kazakhstan forced Moscow's communist regime to halt nuclear weapons testing at proving grounds in their homeland where more than 456 explosions had contaminated the land and its people.

In February 1989, the renowned poet Olzhas Suleimenov called upon his fellow citizens to meet in Alma Ata to discuss how to respond to fresh reports of radioactive contamination at the Soviet's Semipalatinsk Test Site. Five-thousand people responded and collectively issued a call for closing the test site, ending nuclear weapons production, and a universal ban on testing. The movement, which became known as Nevada-Semipalatinsk, grew and held demonstrations throughout Kazakhstan and later in Russia.

On August 6, 1989, 50,000 people attended one of its rallies, which was the largest independent event of its type in the former Soviet Union. Eventually over a million people signed its antinuclear weapons testing petition.

In August 1989, Suleimenov pushed the Supreme Soviet to adopt a resolution calling for a U.S.-Soviet test moratorium. The movement also worked to prevent Moscow from simply shifting all Soviet nuclear testing to the Novaya Zemlya site in northern Russia. To appease the growing protests, Moscow would later acknowledge it had cancelled 11 out of 18 planned nuclear tests.

In May 1990, the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and the Nevada-Semipalatinsk movement teamed up for an International Citizens Congress that brought together 300 delegates, including downwinders and disarmament leaders, from 25 countries to Alma Ata. A crowd of 20,000 gathered in support. Before the conference convened, Dr. Bernard Lown of IPPNW and Suleimenov met with Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze to reinstitute an earlier Soviet test moratorium.

Under pressure from President Nazarbayev, the people of Kazakhstan, and the international disarmament community, then-Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev would authorize only one more test (in Russia) and then declare a moratorium on October 5, 1991, prompting U.S. legislators to introduce nuclear test moratorium legislation in Congress.

With strong grassroots support in the United States, the legislation, which mandated a 9-month U.S. testing halt and negotiations on a CTBT, gathered strong support and was approved in September 1992. The last U.S. nuclear test explosion was conducted on September 23, 1992. ➔



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The following year, U.S. nongovernmental organizations and legislators successfully pressed President Clinton to indefinitely extend the U.S. test moratorium in July 1993 and launch multilateral negotiations on the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. With the help of international protests over French and Chinese nuclear testing in 1995 and 1996, NGOs exerted strong pressure on governments negotiating the treaty at the Conference on Disarmament to pursue a zero-yield test ban and to complete talks by the end of 1996.

The actions of the people of Kazakhstan and other test ban opponents are but one dramatic example of how leaders from civil society have raised awareness about the dangers of nuclear weapons and demanded that their governments act decisively to permanently halt nuclear weapons testing.

As we mark the second official International Day Against Nuclear Tests, we should recognize the courageous efforts of the Nevada-Semipalatinsk movement and generations of other citizen activists and leaders, which have been the driving force behind governmental effort to permanently and verifiably bring an end to all nuclear test explosions.

The Tasks Ahead

Although the CTBT was opened for signature fifteen years ago this month, our work is far from complete.

We representatives of civil society call upon leading governments to:

- 1) redouble their stalled efforts to push for a permanent and verifiable end to nuclear testing;
- 2) improve national and international programs to better understand and responsibly address the health and environmental damage caused by past nuclear testing; and
- 3) take further steps to reinforce the purposes of the CTBT and move with greater speed to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

The International Security Value of the CTBT

It is time to finally recognize that nuclear testing is a dangerous and unnecessary vestige of the past and, fifteen years after its completion, finally bring the CTBT into force.

As General John Shalikashvili, the former chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff concluded in 2001: "For the sake of future generations, it would be unforgivable to neglect any reasonable action that can help prevent nuclear proliferation, as the Test Ban Treaty clearly would."

By banning all nuclear weapon test explosions, the CTBT prevents the established nuclear-weapon states from proof-testing new, more sophisticated warhead designs. Without the option of nuclear explosive testing, newer members of the club cannot perfect smaller, more easily deliverable warheads.

Unfortunately, the CTBT does not also expressly forbid other activities that can lead to qualitative improvements to nuclear weapons, the pursuit of which undermines the stated objectives of the treaty.

The CTBT also serves to reinforce the nonproliferation system by serving as a confidence-building measure about a state's nuclear intentions and, in this regard, it can help head-off and de-escalate regional tensions.

For these and other reasons, CTBT entry into force has long been considered a key part of the fulfillment of Article VI of the NPT and the goal of "effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament."

With the CTBT in force, global and national capabilities to detect and deter possible clandestine nuclear testing by other states will be significantly greater. Entry-into-force is essential to making short-notice, on-site inspections possible and maintaining long-term political and financial support from other nations for the operation of the International Monitoring System and International Data Center. ➡



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Accelerating Entry Into Force

Although 182 states have signed the CTBT, the treaty must still be ratified by the remaining hold out states—the United States, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, Iran, Indonesia, Egypt, and North Korea—before it can formally enter into force.

In three weeks, CTBT states parties will gather here at the UN to speak about the value of the treaty and the need for prompt entry into force. We appreciate those statements, but actions speak louder than words. That conference must help produce a serious diplomatic action plan for getting the remaining hold out states on board.

Ratification by the United States and China is particularly important. Given their existing nuclear test moratoria and 1996 signature of the CTBT, Washington and Beijing already bear most CTBT-related responsibilities, yet their failure to ratify has denied them—and others—the full security benefits of CTBT entry into force.

In April 2009, U.S. President Barack Obama's pledged to "immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty." He said, "After more than five decades of talks, it is time for the testing of nuclear weapons to finally be banned." We agree.

But now, President Obama must translate those lofty words into action and mount a serious public campaign to win the support of two-thirds of the U.S. Senate for ratification of the treaty without conditions.

To date, the Obama administration has done too little. With the support of a wide array of NGOs in the United States and around the globe the Obama administration can and must make the case that the Treaty enhances international security, is effectively verifiable, and is essential to curb the spread of nuclear weapons in the decades to come.

To indicate the seriousness of his intention to do so, we call on President Obama to promptly name a senior, high-level White House coordinator for the CTBT effort.

The technical and political case for the CTBT is even stronger than it was in 1999 when the Senate failed to provide its advice and consent for ratification. What is necessary is the political will to pursue ratification and willingness by all Senators to review the new evidence in support of the treaty rather than arrive at judgments based on old information or misinformation.

It is also time for China's leaders to finally act on the CTBT. For years, Chinese government representatives have reported that the CTBT is before the National People's Congress for consideration but has apparently taken no action to win legislative approval needed for ratification. We note the January 19, 2011 Joint Statement by President Hu Jintao and President Barack Obama stating that "... both sides support early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty."

Washington's renewed pursuit of CTBT ratification opens up opportunities for China and other Annex 2 states—such as Indonesia—to lead the way toward entry into force by ratifying before the United States does. Action by Beijing would increase its credibility as a nonproliferation leader and improve the chances that other states in Asia, as well as the United States, would follow suit.

India and Pakistan could advance the cause of nuclear disarmament and substantially ease regional tensions by converting their unilateral test moratoria into a legally binding commitment to end nuclear testing through the CTBT.

Unfortunately, since their tit-for-tat nuclear tests in 1998 that were condemned by the UN Security Council in Resolution 1172, neither India nor Pakistan have transformed their de facto nuclear test moratorium into a legally binding commitment not to conduct nuclear test explosions.

It is past time for India's current leaders to pursue the recommendations of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's eloquent and visionary 1988 action plan for disarmament, which calls for "a moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons ... to set the stage for negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty." ↻



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India's security and that of Asia would be enhanced if New Delhi were to seek adoption of the CTBT along with its nuclear-armed Asian neighbors. Pakistan, which can ill-afford the expensive and senseless continuation of its fissile and missile race with India, should welcome a legally binding test ban with India.

With no shortage of conflict and hostility in the Middle East, ratification by Israel, Egypt and Iran would reduce nuclear-weapons-related security concerns in the region. It would also help create the conditions necessary for the realization of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Likewise, if Israel were to ratify the CTBT, it would bring that nation closer to the nuclear nonproliferation mainstream and help encourage other states in the region to follow suit.

Iranian ratification would help reduce concerns that its nuclear program could be used to develop and deploy deliverable nuclear warheads. Continued failure by Iran to ratify the CTBT raises further questions about the nature of its sensitive nuclear fuel cycle activities.

The Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea's (DPRK) 2006 and 2009 nuclear tests and rumors of further detonations undermine Asian security. We call on the DPRK to declare a halt to further nuclear testing pending the resumption of the Six-Party talks and for the participants in those talks to make North Korea's approval of the CTBT one of the key steps in the action-for-action process for denuclearization and normalization.

Addressing the Damage Caused by Nuclear Testing

Radioactive isotopes have long half-lives. The damage caused by the 2,051 nuclear test explosions conducted worldwide lingers on at dozens of test sites from Lop Nor, to the atolls of the Pacific, to Nevada, to Algeria, to Australia, to Semipalatinsk, across Russia, in Kazakhstan and beyond.

Exposure to ionizing radiation is harmful to humans. The leaders of the nuclear testing nations have exposed their people – both within their territories and outside their territories – to radiation without their informed consent.

Most of the test sites are in the lands of indigenous peoples and far from the capitals of the testing governments. The 528 atmospheric tests delivered radioactive materials that produced approximately 430,000 additional cancer fatalities by the year 2000, according to a 1990 report by the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. The U.S. National Cancer Institute estimated in a 1997 report that the 90 dirtiest U.S. tests could cause 7,500-75,000 additional cases of thyroid cancer.

While underground nuclear blasts pose a smaller radioactive hazard than atmospheric tests, there has been widespread venting from underground explosions, especially at the Semipalatinsk test site in Kazakhstan. The United States has acknowledged that 433 of its 824 underground tests released radioactive material into the atmosphere. In addition, underground nuclear blasts leave a legacy of radioactive contamination, which eventually might leak into the surrounding environment.

Our knowledge of the extent of the harm caused by five decades of nuclear test explosions underground, in the atmosphere, and underwater is still incomplete. The governments responsible for the damage have not adequately provided the assistance to survivors and resources necessary to mitigate the environmental contamination. In fact, the major testing states have been reluctant to recognize the harm inflicted by testing and the rights of those people who have been most affected.

For example, for more than thirty years, France conducted 46 atmospheric and 147 underground nuclear tests in the South Pacific at Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls in French Polynesia. It is estimated that nearly half of France's underground nuclear tests released radioactive material into the atmosphere. ➡



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH SEPTEMBER 2011 ARTICLES

Civil Society's Perspective

Today, there are lingering concerns over hazards to the environment and the health of local populations. Beyond the presence of plutonium and cesium on land and in the lagoon, as reported by the IAEA in 1998, ongoing monitoring of the geology of Moruroa Atoll has revealed major hazards on the north-east flank of the atoll. There were 28 underground tests in this north-east sector, with six tests releasing radioactivity into the ocean environment through cracks in the basalt base of the atoll.

A January 2011 report by the French Atomic Energy Commission (CEA) outlines scenarios where a landslide of the side of the atoll – amounting to 670 million cubic meters of rock – could create a 15 to 20 meter high wave and swamp the east of the atoll. The collapse would also send out waves forming a 10 to 13 meter tsunami, which could threaten the neighboring inhabited island of Tureia.

Maohi (Polynesian) workers who staffed the Moruroa and Fangataufa test sites from 1966 to 1996 have formed “Moruroa e Tatou” (Moruroa and Us), an association to campaign for compensation from the Government of France for the health effects of their work. They have joined with former French military personnel who are members of the Association des Veterans des Essais Nucleaires in France (Association of Nuclear Test Veterans), to campaign for compensation for the health effects of exposure to ionizing radiation.

Although the French government established a compensation scheme known as the Morin law in 2010, veterans groups have criticized the way the law is being implemented. (Of the first 12 cases by French military veterans put before the committee which runs the compensation scheme, only one was granted compensation). Living many thousands of miles away from France, Maohi workers often lack the necessary documentation and resources to mount their case for compensation, with many of the archives remaining closed under national security regulations.

On the occasion of the first International Day against Nuclear Tests the government of Kazakhstan made an important proposal: the establishment of an international fund—to be managed by the United Nations—to support the survivors of nuclear testing.

We endorse this idea and call upon the UN Secretary-General to organize a conference under the auspices of the United Nations to help mobilize resources for the remediation of contamination and health monitoring and rehabilitation of downwinders near nuclear test sites around the world.

States responsible for the testing at major test sites should report to the conference—and on an annual basis every year thereafter—on their current and future efforts and resource allocations to address the health and environmental impacts of nuclear testing and to rehabilitate populations that have been particularly impacted.

Independent nongovernmental experts, and especially members of affected communities should be invited to participate help develop a multi-year program of action. Many nuclear testing survivors are minorities on the own land whose views have too often been overlooked. That must no longer be the case. . . .

Read more at <http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2011/09/02/day-against-nuclear-tests>