



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION

NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH NOVEMBER 2011 ARTICLES

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Viewpoint and In-Depth Reports

Unfreezing Disarmament by John Burroughs

NEW YORK - Since 2008, eloquent affirmations of the desirability and necessity of achieving a world without nuclear weapons have poured out from many quarters, not least from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and US President Barack Obama. Yet the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has displayed an impressive immunity to the marked shift in rhetoric, remaining mired in deadlock. Operating under an absolute rule of consensus, the UN-affiliated body has conducted no negotiations whatsoever since it produced the text of the agreement banning all nuclear test explosions in 1996. Finland to Host Conference for WMD-Free Middle East. **Read more on pages 2-3**

Modernisation of Nukes Acquiring Priority

BERLIN - In a situation reminiscent of Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb', none of the nuclear weapon states is actively contemplating a future without nukes. On the contrary, the potential for using dreadful atomic arsenal is growing, says a new report. **Read more on pages 4-5**

Middle East Nuke Free Bid Moves to Finland

CAIRO - The four-decade-long bid to free the Middle East from all weapons of mass destruction (WMD) starting with nukes, will move next year to Helsinki as Finland surprisingly decided to host an international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone liberated from all kinds of arms that bring about complete destruction. **Read more on pages 6-8**

IRAN: Nuclear Watchdog Details Pre-2003 Weapons Research

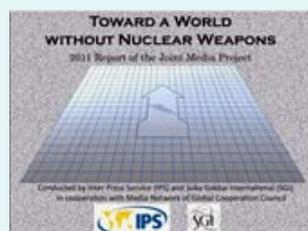
WASHINGTON - A new report on Iran's nuclear programme provides substantial evidence that Iran carried out extensive research into how to make a nuclear weapon prior to 2003 but is shaky about how much work has continued. **Read more on pages 9-10**

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http://www.nuclearabolition.net/documents/Toward_a_World_without_Nuclear_Weapons.pdf



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Viewpoint

Unfreezing Disarmament

By John Burroughs*

NEW YORK (IPS) - Since 2008, eloquent affirmations of the desirability and necessity of achieving a world without nuclear weapons have poured out from many quarters, not least from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and US President Barack Obama.

Yet the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva has displayed an impressive immunity to the marked shift in rhetoric, remaining mired in deadlock. Operating under an absolute rule of consensus, the UN-affiliated body has conducted no negotiations whatsoever since it produced the text of the agreement banning all nuclear test explosions in 1996.

Patience with this lack of productivity has run out. Throughout October, at UN headquarters in New York, UN member states meeting in the First Committee of the General Assembly engaged in a heated and substantive debate on how to get multilateral disarmament moving again. They then approved two resolutions that the General Assembly will formally adopt in early December. The resolutions signal that if the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament continues, next year, as the body ultimately responsible for pursuing one of the United Nations' central aims, the General Assembly is prepared to act.

One course of action would be for the General Assembly to establish a process not subject to the rule of consensus outside the Conference on Disarmament until the latter can deliver results. This was proposed in the First Committee by Austria, Mexico, and Norway, and gained substantial but not majority support. Working groups would address nuclear disarmament and the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons; guarantees of non-use of nuclear weapons against countries not possessing them; negotiation of a treaty to ban production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons, a Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty (FMCT); and prevention of the weaponisation of space.

All of those topics are on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, but it has been disabled by the ability of just one government to stop work by the 65-member group. The majority of member states, many from the Global South, prioritise negotiations on total nuclear disarmament. This is refused by the nuclear-armed permanent five members of the Security Council (China, France, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States). To keep arms control in motion, in the late 1990s the majority reluctantly accepted the position of the Western nuclear powers: negotiations on an FMCT and discussions on other items. Nonetheless, work has not begun.

Pakistan has blocked negotiations on an FMCT

To buy time to build up its nuclear stockpile, since 2009 Pakistan has blocked negotiations on an FMCT. In the mid-2000s, it was the United States stopping talks, when the Bush administration took the baseless position that an FMCT could not be verified. And before then, China and Russia insisted on – and the United States opposed – simultaneous commencement of negotiations on the prevention of space weaponisation.

The history of successfully-negotiated multilateral nuclear treaties also demonstrates the need to avoid the trap of consensus. In the case of the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty, banning tests in the atmosphere, and the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, not all countries then possessing nuclear weapons participated in the negotiations or were initial parties. But they later joined in. And the 1996 Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was adopted by the General Assembly, not the Conference on Disarmament, over the strong opposition of India.

Beginning in 2009, the Permanent Five for the first time ever are holding occasional meetings on transparency and verification. This is a welcome development. However, it also underlines the possibility that future nuclear disarmament negotiations would be carried out by states possessing nuclear weapons, rather than in a UN setting. ➔





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That would be unwise, because it would result in less stringent agreements that lack the legitimacy and effectiveness that only global buy-in could produce. To be used, though, UN-based processes need to be workable as the Conference on Disarmament, paralysed by the rule of consensus, has not been for 15 years.

In addition to flexibility regarding consensus, an approach encompassing more than one multilateral measure at a time is needed. That is another merit of the Austria, Mexico, and Norway proposal. The United States and its allies are adamant that a nuclear weapons-free world must be achieved through a step-by-step approach. But saying that no other multilateral agreement can be pursued until negotiations on an FMCT are completed is a formula for putting off indefinitely decisive action to end the age of nuclear weapons.

An FMCT will likely take years to negotiate and even longer to enter into force. Moreover, as currently envisaged by the permanent five, it would simply end future production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons. Since the older nuclear powers -the United States, Russia, United Kingdom, and France- already have huge stocks of weapons-grade materials, such a cut-off will have little or no practical effect on their military capabilities.

So the step-by-step policy must be discarded and a policy of working on disarmament measures in an integrated and parallel fashion put in its place. Governments should simultaneously negotiate, or at least prepare to negotiate, a fissile materials agreement, non-use obligations, and an agreement on the global elimination of nuclear weapons or combine them all into one negotiation.

If the Conference on Disarmament cannot find a way to resume work in the coming year, the General Assembly should take responsibility and create new pathways to disarmament.

*John Burroughs is Executive Director of the New York-based Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy and co-editor and contributor, Nuclear Disorder or Cooperative Security: U.S. Weapons of Terror, the Global Proliferation Crisis, and Paths to Peace (2007). [IPS Columnist Service | November 2011]

Picture Credit: Ivon Bartholomew | Copyright © IPS-Inter Press Service

The Conference on Disarmament (CD), established in 1979 as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community, was a result of the first Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly held in 1978.

It succeeded other Geneva-based negotiating fora, which include the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1960), the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (1962-68), and the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament (1969-78).

The current Director-General of UNOG Kassym-Jomart Tokayev is the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament as well as the Personal Representative of the UN Secretary-General to the CD.

The terms of reference of the CD include practically all multilateral arms control and disarmament problems. Currently the CD primarily focuses its attention on the following issues: cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters; prevention of an arms race in outer space; effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons including radiological weapons; comprehensive programme of disarmament and transparency in armaments.



Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, Director-General of UNOG
en.wikipedia.org



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Modernisation of Nukes Acquiring Priority

By Ramesh Jaura



BERLIN (IDN) - In a situation reminiscent of Stanley Kubrick's 'Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb', none of the nuclear weapon states is actively contemplating a future without nukes. On the contrary, the potential for using dreadful atomic arsenal is growing, says a new report.

Pointing to some rather disquieting trends worldwide, the paper says: "Although the New START treaty between the United States and Russia (which entered into force on February 5, 2011) arguably represents the most significant arms control advance in two decades, the Treaty contains significant gaps that mean it will not necessarily lead to significant reductions in the number of nuclear weapons held by both parties."

"Whatever the current global rhetoric about nuclear disarmament from the nuclear armed states, in the absence of any further major disarmament or arms control breakthroughs, the evidence points to a new era of nuclear weapons modernisation and growth," cautions Ian Kearns, author of the report.

He substantiates this view with data and analysis related to current stockpiles of nuclear weapons held outside Britain, examines force modernisation trends, declaratory policy and nuclear doctrine, and the security drivers that underpin nuclear weapons possession in each state.

The report is intended as a "discussion paper" of the UK Trident Commission, an independent, cross-party commission, to examine British nuclear weapons policy. It has been published by the British American Security Information Council (BASIC) at the onset of November.

More Nuke States

Though there has been a major reduction in the global nukes stockpile since the mid-1980s, the number of nuclear weapon states has gone up, says the report, adding: "Nuclear weapons," totaling some 20,000, "are present today in some of the most unstable and violence prone regions of the world, and in North East Asia, the Middle East and South Asia, there are serious conflict and proliferation concerns that suggest an increased potential for nuclear weapons use."

The data analysis reveals that long-term nuclear force modernisation or upgrade programmes are underway in all the currently nuclear armed states: Hundreds of billions of dollars are earmarked for the purpose over the next decade, not only in the United States and Russia but in major development programmes in China, India, Pakistan and elsewhere.

Modernised Nukes

Almost all of the nuclear armed states are continuing to produce new or modernized nuclear weapons and some, such as Pakistan and India, appear to be seeking smaller, lighter, warheads than they possess currently, to allow these either to be delivered to greater distances or to allow them to be deployed over shorter ranges and for more tactical purposes.

As regards delivery systems, the study says: "Russia and the United States have recommitted to maintaining a triad of land, sea and air forces for the long-term. China, India and Israel are seeking to build triads of their own. In the case of China and India, major ballistic missile programmes are underway, both to increase the range and sophistication of land-based systems and to build fleets of nuclear powered ballistic missile submarines. ➔"

Picture credit: ultimatepreparedness.wordpress.com



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"In the case of Israel, the size of its nuclear tipped cruise missile enabled submarine fleet is being increased and the country seems to be on course, on the back of its satellite launch rocket programme, for future development of an inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM).

"Pakistan is not only rapidly increasing the size of its warhead stockpile but is building new plutonium production reactors, which could add to its fissile material stocks and, like North Korea, it is seeking to rapidly enhance its missile capabilities.

"France, having recently completed the modernisation of its ballistic missile submarine fleet, is also introducing new and more capable bombers to the air component of its nuclear force, though at reduced aircraft numbers overall, and is introducing new and better nuclear warheads to both its sea-launched ballistic missiles and to its aircraft."

These findings come less than three years after President Barack Obama's historic speech in Prague (the Czech Republic) in April 2009 in which he envisioned a nuclear free world, though not his lifetime.

Nukes Considered Essential

The shocking fact is that in all nuke armed states "nuclear weapons are currently seen as essential to national security and in several of them, nuclear weapons are assigned roles in national security strategy that go well beyond deterring a nuclear attack."

This, says Kearns, is the case in Russia, Pakistan, Israel, France and "almost certainly" in North Korea. India has left the door open to using nuclear arsenal in response to chemical or biological weapons attacks.

In fact, as the independent International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament pointed out: "Only China limits the stated role to deterrence against the threat or use by others of nuclear weapons; all others keep open the option, to a greater or lesser extent, of using their nuclear weapons in response to other kinds of threats."

The Blame Game

All nuclear power armed states justify modernisation and upgrade programmes by pointing to their strategic or potential vulnerability, in the face of nuclear and conventional force developments taking place elsewhere, says the report.

Moscow claims that the Russian nuclear programme is in response to concerns over U.S. ballistic missile defence and advanced conventional capabilities like Conventional Prompt Global Strike, as well as to concerns over conventional weakness relative to China.

China justifies its nuke modernisation and upgrade programme by referring to these same developments in the United States and by pointing out India's plans. India, on the other hand, says its nuke programme is driven partly by fear over Pakistan and China. Pakistan defends its nuclear programme by referring to Indian conventional force superiority. Far away from South Asia, France has endorsed nuclear weapons modernisation as a response to stockpiles elsewhere that "keep on growing".

Non-strategic Nukes

The study points out that in some states, non-strategic nuclear weapons are seen to have a particular value as compensation for conventional force weakness relative to perceived or potential adversaries.

"These weapons are seen, in this regard, to provide the conventionally weak state with conflict escalation options short of an all out nuclear attack on an adversary, which may not be seen as credible," says the report. This situation mirrors aspects of NATO nuclear doctrine during the Cold War.

Nuclear weapons are therefore assigned war-fighting roles in military planning in countries like Russia and Pakistan. In Russia, this takes the form of the nuclear de-escalation doctrine. In Pakistan, it is implied, but left ambiguous to confuse risk calculations in the minds of any adversary, but principally India. [IDN-InDepthNews - November 3, 2011]



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Middle East Nuke Free Bid Moves to Finland

By **Baher Kamal***



CAIRO (IDN) - The four-decade-long bid to free the Middle East from all weapons of mass destruction (WMD) starting with nukes, will move next year to Helsinki as Finland surprisingly decided to host an international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone liberated from all kinds of arms that bring about complete destruction.

Map of Israeli Nuclear weapons related facilities The announcement of the conference venue, which was made by the UN on October 14, 2011, falls during a new high peak in the on-going Arab Spring in several countries, mainly Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, and the continuing bitter popular uprisings against dictatorial regimes in Yemen and Syria, among others.

The decision also coincides with a strong, increasing wave of popular protests in some key Arab countries against Israel – the sole country in the region to have nuclear weapons, estimated at 210 and 250 atomic warheads. This number is equivalent to more than double of the combined atomic arsenals of India and Pakistan.

These popular protests reached their zenith in Cairo in late August and early September this year, with the assault on the Israeli embassy and the burning of the Israeli flags. Other protests took place in Tunisia, Jordan and Morocco.

Meanwhile, Israel has also been witnessing a massive popular movement against the social policies, high food and services costs and unemployment rates of its current, far-right government chaired by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Palestinian Statehood Bid

Then came the Palestinian Authority's bid at the UN General Assembly in September, for a full recognition of Palestine as an independent, sovereign State as supported by the UN General Assembly umpteen times. The move led to more tensions in the region in view of the adamant and open rejection by both Israel and the U.S. which decided to veto it.

"All these tensions will hardly help facilitate the Finnish task to advance on the road of freeing the Middle East from nuclear weapons," a retired Egyptian nuclear expert told this journalist on condition of anonymity.

"There is now a new scenario in the region. The emerging democratic systems in key countries like Egypt and hopefully soon also in Syria, should not be expected to listen to their 'Master's Voice' – the U.S, as the falling dictatorial regimes have been doing for long decades," added the expert who actively participated in the preparations for the 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010 conferences to review the (Nuclear) Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

The turbulent, oil-rich, awakening Middle East is the sole key region that is not free from atomic weapons. Other regions, including entire continents, have already done so. Such is the case of Latin America and the Caribbean; the South Pacific; South-East Asia; Central Asia; and Africa.

The task before Jaakko Laajava, under-secretary of State in Finland's foreign ministry, who has been appointed as facilitator of the conference expected to take place "broadly in 2012", appears to be anything but easy. The launch of an international Middle East conference was decided by the May 3-28, 2010 NPT Review conference in New York, following persistent pressures by Egypt – the original author of the Middle East nuclear free zone initiative since late 60s – with the backing of Arab countries, Turkey, and the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as some European nations, mostly Scandinavians. ➡

*Baher Kamal, is an Egyptian-born, Spanish national, secular, anti-war journalist and analyst specialised in international affairs with focus on the Middle East. He is publisher and editor of Human Wrongs Watch. [IDN-InDepthNews - November 6, 2011]

Picture: Israel's Dimona nuclear power plant | Credit: www.panoramio.com



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In run-up to the NPT review meeting, Egyptian diplomats reiterated in different fora the more than 40-year old demand that the long-troubled Middle East region must be freed of atomic arsenal and all weapons of mass destruction.

The Cairo initiative, first launched in 1961, has been assuming contours over the past four decades, and as Cairo officials have reiterated, all Egyptian governments have been relentlessly sticking to their "clear and totally transparent position" towards nuclear weapons and in general all weapons of mass destruction (atomic, biological and chemicals). Knowledgeable sources assure that Cairo policy still holds ground.

The Cairo Document

Egypt submitted to all parties involved in the New York 2010 NPT Review conference, a working paper through which it called on the meeting to express "regret that no progress has been achieved for the implementation of the 1995 (UN) resolution," which confirmed previous resolutions to free the region from nuclear weapons.

That resolution established a solid base for negotiating the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, declaring it a nuclear-free-zone.

Only days before the New York meeting, an Egyptian Foreign Affairs ministry spokesperson pointed out on April 26, 2010 that Cairo has always been working for achieving the goal of a nuclear weapon free Middle East through international fora and groups of countries that "share our thinking, in particular Arab and African countries and also some European states."

The Egyptian Foreign Affairs ministry called on "all States to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty," fully aware that Israel is the only country in the region to reject the Treaty. A spokesperson said that, through its participation in the 2010 Review conference, "Egypt wants to ensure the accession of all States to this NPT." He stressed that "the non-accession by Israel to the NPT not only jeopardises security and peace in the region, but also makes them unviable."

The Call for a UN Conference

The Cairo document urged the NPT Review meeting in New York to organise a UN conference by 2011 with the participation of all countries in the region to work out a formal accord ensuring their effective commitment to free the Middle East from nuclear arms.

Cairo called for such a conference to be organised under the UN flag, so as to ensure that its decisions would be legally binding. Instead, the 2010 Review meeting decided to hold an "international conference" with non-binding recommendations. This is an indication that the WMD-free Middle East conference in Finland in 2012 will produce at best a "toothless baby tiger," as an Asian diplomat confided to this journalist on condition of anonymity.

The Israeli Refusal

Backed by a large number of European countries and firmly supported by the U.S., Israel sticks to its decision not disclose its nuclear arsenal to any international body. It insists on keeping its military nuclear programme strictly confidential, while systematically refusing to join the Non Proliferation Treaty.

As a way to confirm Tel Aviv's stand not to facilitate attempts to free the Middle East from weapons of mass destruction, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu refused to participate in the Nuclear Security Summit which was organised by U.S. President Barack Obama in Washington on April 13-14, 2010. Netanyahu also deserted the NPT Review conference in May last year in New York. ➡





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Key Requirements

Egypt's perspective of the cornerstone of a WMD-free Middle East zone was spelt out by the Egypt State Information Service (SIS) in an official paper disseminated one week ahead of the NPT Review conference. The document stated: "Egyptian vision for achieving peace and stability in the (Middle East) region is based on fundamental principles such as a fair, just solution of the Palestinian cause and the integral implementation of all resolutions based on international legitimacy."

Egypt's unequivocal position is that:

- The possession of weapons of mass destruction does not guarantee security to any (Middle East) country; this will be ensured only through a just and comprehensive peace; and
- The lack of "any positive step" by Israel towards freeing the region of nukes as well as its position based on the 'military superiority doctrine', will only contribute to aggravating regional insecurity.

In calling for total elimination of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction in the region, Egypt rejects any sort of discrimination or 'partialisation' that might be imposed by one party upon another in the Middle East. Egypt rejects any possible 'selectiveness' of any weapon or any country, and rejects any concession of any special status to any country in the region.

The process of disarming the Middle East of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction must be carried out under international and comprehensive supervision, in particular by the United Nations and its agencies. Egypt demands the implementation of several UN resolutions calling for freeing the Middle East from nuclear weapons, in particular the UN Security Council resolution number 487 adopted in 1981.

U.S. Nuclear Umbrella

Far ahead of the NPT review conference, Cairo had rejected the U.S. offer to guarantee defence of the region against atomic weapons as part of a comprehensive Middle East peace plan. This offer amounting to a nuclear umbrella is reported to have been made by President Barack Obama's predecessor, George W. Bush.

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

In fact, on August 18, 2009, during his first visit to Washington in five years, Egypt's deposed president Hosni Mubarak insisted that "what the Middle East needs is peace, security, stability and development", not nuclear weapons. Egypt reaffirmed its pledge underlying the country's commitment for the establishment of a "nuclear free Middle East". Pre-empting discussion on the issue, Mubarak said in an exclusive interview with the leading official Egyptian daily Al Ahram on August 17, 2009: "Egypt will not be part of any American nuclear umbrella intended to protect the Gulf countries".

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

He asserted that "the Middle East does not need any nuclear powers, be they Iran or Israel -- what we need is peace, security, stability and development". In any case, "we have not received any official communication regarding such a proposal", he added. On the same day, Ambassador Suleiman Awad, spokesperson of the Egyptian Presidency, also commented on a U.S. nuclear umbrella in the region. "This is not the first time the issue is raised; it is part of the U.S. defence policy," he said.

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



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IRAN: Nuclear Watchdog Details Pre-2003 Weapons Research

By Barbara Slavin



The Tehran Research Reactor where uranium enriched to 20 percent is used to produce medical isotopes.
Credit:Jim Lobe/IPS

WASHINGTON, Nov 8, 2011 (IPS) - A new report on Iran's nuclear programme provides substantial evidence that Iran carried out extensive research into how to make a nuclear weapon prior to 2003 but is shaky about how much work has continued.

Citing "a wide variety of independent sources", including material from 10 member states and from a foreign scientist who worked on the programme, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) said Tuesday that Iranians had conducted multiple activities "relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device" from the late 1990s until 2003.

The material, listed in great detail in a 14-page annex to a regular IAEA report on Iran, should provide ample new ammunition for the agency and the international community to press Iran for answers and for improved access to its nuclear facilities. There is no indication, however, that Iran has actually built a nuclear weapon.

There is new information that Iran experimented with producing uranium metal for a bomb, with high explosives needed to trigger a nuclear device, and studied how to produce a warhead small enough to fit on a ballistic missile. Satellite information shows Iran built a "large explosives containment vessel" at a site near Tehran in which to conduct experiments, the report said.

"It remains for Iran to explain the rationale behind these activities," which violate Iran's commitments to peaceful nuclear activities under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the agency said.

The report is much less authoritative about what went on after 2003, when Iran at least temporarily halted the programme following the revelation that it was building a uranium enrichment plant at Natanz and a heavy water plant and reactor at Arak. ➡



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"The Agency's ability to construct an equally good understanding of activities in Iran after the end of 2003 is reduced due to the more limited information available to the Agency," the report acknowledged.

Thus the findings appear to be consistent with a much maligned 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate which expressed "medium confidence" that Iran had not restarted a weaponisation programme at that time.

Conservative groups immediately pounced on the findings to demand harsh new measures against Iran, including sanctioning Iran's Central Bank and retaining "all options" – meaning a military attack.

"There can no longer be any doubt about the intent or direction of the Iran nuclear weapons effort, which is progressing rapidly," said a statement by Richard Stone and Malcolm Hoenlein, the chairman and executive vice chairman, respectively, of the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations. "The report leaves no room for ambiguity and demands a quick, comprehensive plan in which all options are included."

However, the main aspects of the programme have been known for several years and discussed in previous IAEA publications.

David Albright, a former nuclear inspector and president of the Institute for Science and International Security, told IPS that he was comforted by the new evidence that "pressure worked" and that Iran stopped what the IAEA called a "structured" programme in 2003. "It's important to know that they didn't succeed in building a reliable warhead that could fit on one of their missiles," he said. "We're much better off that it was stopped when it was."

He added, however, that the Iranians "know how to build a nuclear weapon and know the problems they have to solve to make them reliable."

Sourcing for allegations of Iranian work after 2003 is thin. For example, only one unnamed IAEA member provided information that Iran had tried after 2004 to manufacture elements of what is known as a neutron initiator, necessary to trigger a chain reaction leading to a nuclear explosion.

Two unnamed member states were the source of allegations that in 2008 and 2009, Iran carried out computer modeling of a nuclear device "subjected to shock compression", another step in building a reliable bomb.

"There are new details but the overall picture that the report paints we have heard before," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. "There is no new information about a new location or a new area of experimentation."

The Iranian government had no immediate reaction to the report, which was given to members of the IAEA board and swiftly leaked to the press. In the past, Tehran has accused the IAEA of confronting it with forgeries, while admitting that some research has taken place.

The Barack Obama administration was also subdued and suggested it would use the information to press harder for a diplomatic solution, including tougher enforcement of existing sanctions against Iran.

In some respects, the most worrisome aspects of the report were in its initial pages devoted to Iran's safeguarded facilities. The report said Iran has continued its slow but steady accumulation of enriched uranium and now has nearly 5,000 kilogrammes of uranium enriched to five percent and nearly 74 kilogrammes of uranium enriched to 20 percent U-235. If converted to weapons grade uranium - which is 90 percent U-235 - that stockpile is enough for several bombs.

The findings were revealed in advance of an IAEA board meeting next week that is likely to be stormy.

"The most important thing is for Iran to come clean on weaponisation," Albright said. "If they deal with this, the enrichment programme will be much less of a problem."



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JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=551:unfreezing-disarmament&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

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GERMAN

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=538:atomare-abruestung-eine-maer-&catid=5:german&Itemid=6

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=539:modernisation-nukes&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

PERSIAN

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=562:modernisation-of-nukes&catid=14:chinese-hindi-urdu-persian&Itemid=15

TURKISH

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=545:nuekleer-ilah-modernizasyonu-oencelik-kazanyor&catid=4:turkish&Itemid=5

Middle East Nuke Free Bid Moves to Finland

ARABIC

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=549:middle-east-nuke-bid-finland&catid=3:arabic&Itemid=4

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=541:middle-east-nuke-free-bid-moves-to-finland-japanese&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

TURKISH

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=546:nuekleersiz-ortadou-tartmas-finlandiyaya-tanyor&catid=4:turkish&Itemid=5

IRAN: Nuclear Watchdog Details Pre-2003 Weapons Research

JAPANESE

http://www.nuclearabolition.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=559:iran-iaea&catid=2:japanese-korean&Itemid=3

TURKISH

<http://ipsinternational.org/tr/news.asp?idnews=132>



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NEWSLETTER FOR STRENGTHENING AWARENESS OF NUCLEAR ABOLITION WITH NOVEMBER 2011 ARTICLES

What Others Say

Don't Tell an Iranian to 'Do This or That'

By Ramesh Jaura



BERLIN (IDN) - "If you tell an Iranian 'you must do this or that', he will tell you in a loud 'NO!' But if you ask him politely to do something, he will answer 'yes' and will do its best to do it," says Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran's ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"So the West must learn one thing: do not threaten or try to use force against Iranians, and we'll stick to the principles of dialogue and compromise," he adds in an interview with Nima Ghadakpour at the UN nuclear watchdog's headquarters in Vienna. The full interview was shown on November 22, 2011 on Euronews.

A poised response to another round of sanctions threatened by IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano's rather controversial report reflecting his "serious concerns regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program," is also reflected in Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi's remarks in an interview with the German weekly magazine, Der Spiegel.

Nukes "un-Islamic"

Asked whether he really expects Iranians to put up with an intensified economic boycott, Salehi said: "These are inconveniences we're willing to accept. With 3,000 years of history behind us, 30 or even 50 years spent under an embargo are a mere footnote. We won't give up our independence and we will continue our civilian nuclear program. There is great unanimity on this point both within our government and among the people."

"Iran's revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei," he said, had issued "a fatwa, a ruling according to religious law, describing nuclear weapons as 'un-Islamic'. They are 'haram,' forbidden, which means these weapons of mass destruction play no role in our defense strategy. That's the truth, and anything else is propaganda."

Answering another question, Iran's foreign minister averred: "The IAEA is acting under pressure from certain countries . . . ('Israel and its ally, the United States' – Spiegel) . . . so we are prepared for everything. But we have no fear of the discussion at the IAEA concerning this document. Mr. Amano is facing difficult times. We will hold him and the IAEA accountable for their conclusions."

Tehran's ambassador to the IAEA also does not leave any doubt either about his disapproval of Amano – a Japanese national committed to a nuke-free world. He points out that "before the publication of the IAEA report, the Israelis and the Americans announced to the world that the document contained revelations about Iran's nuclear program."

"Surprise at no surprises"

"After the publication of this report," Soltanieh adds, "everyone has said that ultimately there was nothing surprising in it. In short, everyone seemed surprised that there were no surprises. This is very important: and this is why Americans and Israelis failed to convince the other members of the agency to pass a tough resolution against Iran's nuclear program."

He further tells Euronews: ". . . after the errors made by the Director General of the agency, most member countries, particularly the non-aligned countries, including the Egyptian ambassador and my Cuban colleague protested against the publication of this report. And then finally, the resolution adopted on the last day was not at all to the taste of Americans or Israelis.

"Also the last, less severe resolution did not get the vote of all member countries. The resolution calls on Iranians to continue to cooperate with the agency." ➔

Picture: Ali Asghar Soltanieh, Iran's ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency | Credit: Tehran Times



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Soltanieh says: "It was a simple meeting of members of the IAEA, but the mistake of Director General Amano was to create a climate of hostility between the participating countries. In fact, instead of negotiating with the Iranians regarding possible military dimensions of their program, Mr. Amano, released the report, which was supposed to be confidential." However, Tehran's ambassador to the IAEA assures to doubting Thomases that "Iran (a founding member of the United Nations) is a responsible country and follows its commitments to the NPT (Non Proliferation Treaty). We will continue to cooperate, so visits and inspections will continue in Iran."

Asked what he thought was the solution to the Iranian nuclear issue and what direction it would take, Soltanieh says: "You know that the Iranian nuclear issue, instead of being a technical matter became a political issue ever since it became the subject of debate in the UN Security Council. And ever since it became a political issue, the problem became more complicated."

According to the report tabled by IAEA Director General, since 2008, officials of the Islamic Republic have not allowed inspectors to visit all of the nuclear sites. Soltanieh said these were two different points."

"Concerning the inspections ... There are ongoing inspections, and the cameras of the agency are still present. The 10 page report written by Mr Amano, says that everything is under control, whether it be the enrichment centres at Natanz, Fordo, Isfahan and Arak. Everything is under the control of the IAEA," Tehran's ambassador to the UN nuclear watchdog told Euronews. "The second point concerns the accusations made by the Agency. It said that Iran wanted to focus on pre-2003 studies to develop nuclear weapons. We have said several times that to make such accusations, they must first provide evidence," Soltanieh added.

Iranian officials have been supported by Professor Ramesh Thakur, director of the Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Disarmament, Australian National University. He argues: "Using the same evidence, Mohamed ElBaradei's reports concluded there was no conclusive proof Iran had crossed the weapons threshold. His successor Yukio Amano concludes there is no conclusive proof that Iran's nuclear program is peaceful and he 'has serious concerns regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program'."

IAEA Director General's November 8 report to the Board of Governors underscores Thakur's reservations in that it avers: "While the Agency continues to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material at the nuclear facilities . . . declared by Iran under its Safeguards Agreement, as Iran is not providing the necessary cooperation, including by not implementing its Additional Protocol, the Agency is unable to provide credible assurance about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities."

Reminiscent of months ahead of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in March 2002, the report adds: "The Agency has serious concerns regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme. After assessing carefully and critically the extensive information available to it, the Agency finds the information to be, overall, credible. The information indicates that Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device. The information also indicates that prior to the end of 2003, these activities took place under a structured programme, and that some activities may still be ongoing."

The Federation of American Scientists draws attention to the fact that Iran's nuclear program began in the Shah's era (from September 16, 1941 until his overthrow by the Iranian Revolution on February 11, 1979) including a plan to build 20 nuclear power reactors. Two power reactors in Bushehr, on the coast of the Persian Gulf, were started but remained unfinished when they were bombed and damaged by the Iraqis during the Iran-Iraq war.

Following the revolution in 1979, all nuclear activity was suspended, though subsequently work was resumed on a somewhat more modest scale. Current plans extend to the construction of 15 power reactors and two research reactors. Research and development efforts also were conducted by the Shah's regime on fissile material production, although these efforts were halted during the Iranian revolution and the Iran-Iraq war.

Iran ratified the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty in 1970, and since February 1992 has allowed the IAEA to inspect its nuclear facilities. [IDN-InDepthNews – November 23, 2011]



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What Others Say

New Network Seeks Nuke-Free World

By Ernest Corea



WASHINGTON DC (IDN) - Thirty former senior political, diplomatic and military leaders from thirteen countries China, India and Pakistan which are "nuclear powers" have launched the Asia Pacific Leadership Network for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (APLN).

Its objective is "to inform and energize public opinion, and especially high-level policymakers, to take seriously the very real threats posed by nuclear weapons, and do everything possible to achieve a world in which they are contained, diminished and ultimately eliminated."

"Existing arsenals amount to some 23,000 weapons with a combined destructive capacity of 150,000 Hiroshima bombs," says the network.

The network's convener, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans, says that the "quest to eliminate nuclear weapons cannot begin to succeed without the determined engagement of policymakers in the Asia Pacific region. And this stellar group of senior, respected and extraordinarily experienced individuals can really help make that happen."

Founding members include several former Prime Ministers, UN Under Secretaries for Disarmament, Foreign Ministers, ambassadors and heads of research institutions. They are from Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Rep. of Korea, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam.

Network members will conduct advocacy programs directed at governments in the region, commission research, organize conference and seminars and maintain an informational web site www.a-pln.org.

Global Threat

The text of the network's launch-declaration follows:

Why this new Network? We have joined together to support a nuclear weapons free world, believing that these weapons pose an existential threat to all nations and peoples.

As a group of individuals who have held high executive or advisory positions across the Asia Pacific region – from South Asia to East Asia and Australasia – we will work to promote policies in our own region and beyond to effectively contain, diminish and eliminate nuclear weapons, and to create a security environment conducive to the achievement of those goals.

We have come together in Japan for our inaugural meeting because Hiroshima and Nagasaki remain indelible historical reminders of the horror of nuclear weapons, and the Fukushima disaster a shocking contemporary reminder of the mortal danger of uncontrolled exposure to nuclear radiation.

We believe that we have a particular responsibility to work for change in the Asia Pacific region. As the world's economic, political and security centres of gravity shift inexorably here, our stake in a secure world order – and obligation to contribute with ideas, policy proposals and vision to that end – have grown commensurately. What happens in this region impacts every dimension of the global nuclear agenda. We have shown the way forward with nuclear weapons free zones in the Treaties of Raratonga and Bangkok, but also have – in South Asia and the Korean Peninsula – two of the world's most acute areas of nuclear tension. The quest to eliminate nuclear weapons cannot succeed without the determined engagement of policymakers in the Asia Pacific region. ➔

Picture: APLN Convener Gareth Evans | Credit: melbourne.anglican.com.au



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Inhumane Invention

We believe in a nuclear weapons free world because:

- Nuclear weapons are the most indiscriminately inhumane weapons ever invented, their use an affront to every fundamental principle of international humanitarian law.
- So long as anyone has nuclear weapons there are others who will want them; so long as any nuclear weapons remain anywhere, they are bound one day to be used – by design, mistake or miscalculation – by state or non-state actors; and any such use will be catastrophic.
- While nuclear weapons cannot be uninvented, they can and must be outlawed, as chemical and biological weapons have been.

We believe that the risks associated with nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War world are much more acute than most policymakers accept and most publics are aware. Serious threats persist from the use or misuse of weapons by existing nuclear armed states, newly nuclear-armed states and terrorist actors, and from aspects of the civil fuel cycle:

- Existing arsenals amount to some 23,000 weapons with a combined destructive capacity of 150,000 Hiroshima bombs. That nuclear peace has held since 1946 owes more to good luck than good stewardship. In a world, now, of multiple nuclear-armed states, significant regional tensions, command and control systems of varying sophistication, potentially destabilizing new cyber technology, and continuing development of more modern (including smaller and potentially more useable weapons), it cannot be assumed that such luck will continue.
- The risks of proliferation are growing. Israel for many years, and India and Pakistan since the end of the Cold War, have become nuclear armed states outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); North Korea has tested weapons in defiance of it; should Iran build nuclear weapons others in its region will very likely follow; and many other states have the technical capability to join their ranks. Nuclear armed states inside the NPT have not been disarming fast enough, straining the confidence of their non-nuclear partners in the credibility of the NPT grand bargain.
- Terrorist groups exist which would acquire and use nuclear weapons if they could. The security of nuclear weapons, and the fissile materials which only states can produce, is of critical significance, and despite major improvements in cooperation cannot be assumed to be complete.
- Civil nuclear energy use seems certain to grow significantly in the decades ahead, notwithstanding the impact of the Fukushima tragedy, which makes clear the urgent need for high, universal and mandatory global safety standards, and effective human and technical infrastructure. Potential diversion of material from civilian to military use will remain of continuing concern, with uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing facilities built without international or multilateral management constituting a particular proliferation risk.

Momentum Needed

We believe that efforts to achieve a world free from the threat of nuclear weapons are at a critical stage, and badly need re-energizing, both globally and regionally. Until recently there were grounds for optimism: in the many statements by very senior officials of the Cold War era challenging the role and utility of nuclear weapons in the contemporary world; in a major increase in nuclear-focused analysis and advocacy by research institutes, think tanks and blue-ribbon international panels; and a significant revival of civil society activism.

President Obama showed the way forward with his ground-breaking commitment to achieving "a world without nuclear weapons" in his 2009 Prague speech, and some important developments followed, including agreement by the United States and Russia to make cuts in their deployed strategic nuclear weapons, the modestly successful 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and the productive Washington Nuclear Security Summit, which is to reconvene in Seoul in 2012. ➔



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But that momentum is in danger of stalling. There is little sign of progress on bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, on breaking the negotiation stalemate on a treaty to prohibit further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, on meeting future proliferation risks associated with the civil nuclear sector, or on measures to significantly strengthen the non-proliferation treaty regime.

Further bilateral arms reduction negotiations between the U.S. and Russia have stalled, and there are few if any signs of willingness by the established nuclear weapons powers, both inside and outside the NPT, to embark on serious multilateral arms reduction negotiations of a kind which could eventually lead to a nuclear weapons free world.

Five Commitments

We believe that if the risks of a nuclear weapons world are to be addressed, and the vision of a nuclear weapons free world advanced, policymakers have to get serious about five distinct, but interrelated, sets of policy commitments:

- Action on disarmament: through bilateral and multilateral processes, to dramatically reduce the role and salience of nuclear weapons in national armouries (including through no-first-use commitments, strong negative security assurances and making clear that extended deterrence means a potential nuclear response only to nuclear threat contingencies); minimize their number; dramatically limit their deployment and alert status; and then achieve their total elimination.
- Action on non-proliferation: through strengthening the NPT safeguards regime; universal adoption and effective implementation of the Additional Protocol; action to minimise the proliferation potential of any expansion of civil nuclear energy use, including development of proliferation resistant technologies; and effective international action through the UN Security Council in response to the current proliferation risks posed by North Korea and Iran.
- Action on the critical building blocks for both non-proliferation and disarmament: bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; negotiating an effective Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty and addressing the question of existing stockpiles; continuing to strengthen nuclear security measures worldwide; encouraging the formation of new nuclear weapon free zones particularly in areas subject to tension, including North East Asia and the Middle East; and refining and developing the elements of a Nuclear Weapons Convention (as proposed by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon in his five-point plan for nuclear disarmament) as a foundation for future multilateral negotiations.
- Action to address regional tensions and other non-nuclear factors hindering progress toward disarmament: the quest to delegitimise, minimize and eliminate nuclear weapons will founder unless there is a determined effort to strengthen the relationships, institutions and dialogue and other processes that preserve stability, defuse conflict and build overall trust, confidence and mutual respect in areas of potential nuclear confrontation like South Asia, the Korean Peninsula and the Middle East.
- Action to educate and inform publics about the nuclear threat: sustained public education programs and information campaigns, aimed at exposing young people in particular to the acute dangers posed by nuclear weapons and associated technology, and informing publics of the cost to governments of maintaining nuclear arsenals – at least \$100 billion annually – and the opportunity cost this represents in terms of foregone expenditure elsewhere, especially in developing countries.

Program and Priorities

Our initial work program will focus on three specific areas of manifest significance in our own region as well as in the larger international context:

- Deterrence: belief in nuclear deterrence still has strong resonance in a number of states' policies, not least in the Asia Pacific region, and persuasive arguments need to be made for reducing and ultimately eliminating reliance on nuclear armouries. APLN will address whether nuclear deterrence has any credibility in any context in the present global environment, the proper scope and limits of extended deterrence, and the role played by perceived deterrence needs in South and North East Asia; and will explore the prospects and feasibility of a nuclear weapon free zone, including North Korea, in North East Asia. ➔



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- Transparency and Other Conditions for Disarmament: significant openness –about not only doctrine but capability (including the nature and extent of nuclear weapon stockpiles and their general deployment) – is a crucial precondition for any serious moves toward, disarmament. Such transparency must necessarily be based on mutual trust, confidence and respect, often in short supply in the Asia Pacific region, and APLN will explore ways of meeting these needs.
- Nuclear Fuel Cycle: with the Asia Pacific likely to see particular growth in civil nuclear energy in the decades ahead, this is an important region in which to develop international collaborative approaches to nuclear programs, including multilateral approaches for enrichment and reprocessing, whole-of-life fuel supply assurances, and cooperation on spent fuel management, security and safety. APLN will explore the prospects for an Asian Nuclear Energy Community to further regional collaboration and high non-proliferation, security and safety standards.

Challenging Task

APLN members will meet as regularly as resources permit; engage as appropriate in both individual and collective advocacy; publish group statements from time to time, representing the views of those signing them, aimed at highlighting particular issues in the nuclear policy debate; publish occasional individually signed papers and analyses; and work with partner organisations in hosting, and participating, in workshops and conferences. We appreciate the support we have received from the Nuclear Threat Initiative to enable the initial establishment of the Network and its Secretariat in Canberra.

No-one could be more conscious than we are of the acute sensitivity and difficulty of the task of achieving our vision of a nuclear weapons free world, and the time this will take on even the most optimistic assumptions. We are not naïve about the scale of the challenge.

But we believe there is no more important and challenging policy issue in the world today than saving the planet from the catastrophe that will be inevitable if we – and those around the world who share our concern – do not ultimately succeed. We must achieve a world free once and for all of the horror of nuclear weapons, the most indiscriminately inhumane agents of destruction ever built. [IDN-InDepthNews - November 19, 2011]

*Ernest Corea has served as Sri Lanka's ambassador to Canada, Cuba, Mexico, and the USA. He was Chairman of the Commonwealth Select Committee on the media and development, Editor of the Ceylon 'Daily News' and the Ceylon 'Observer', and was for a time Features Editor and Foreign Affairs columnist of the Singapore 'Straits Times'. He is Global Editor of IDN-InDepthNews and a member of its editorial board as well as President of the Media Task Force of Global Cooperation Council. ☑



Ernest Corea's previous IDN articles:

<http://www.indepthnews.info/index.php/search?searchword=ernest%20corea&ordering=newest&searchphrase=all>



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Red Cross' Disarmament Call

By ICAN



[27 November 2011] - The Council of Delegates of the world's national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have approved an historic resolution calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons and pledging their determination to work towards this common security goal.

The resolution, which reflects growing global anxiety about the humanitarian consequences of continuing reliance on nuclear weapons in the 21st century, stated that the Red Cross and Red Crescent delegates were "deeply concerned

about the destructive power of nuclear weapons, the unspeakable human suffering they cause, the difficulty of controlling their effects in space and time, the threat they pose to the environment and to future generations and the risks of escalation they create".

The ground-breaking resolution, which marks a resurgence of international concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of using nuclear weapons, comes 66 years after atomic weapons were used on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Red Cross doctors helped the survivors in the devastated cities and their shocking reports prompted the first ever Red Cross appeal to ban nuclear weapons.

The resolution was welcomed by the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, which represents more than 200 non-governmental organizations advocating for a ban on nuclear weapons. "This is a momentous event," said Arielle Denis, Senior Campaigner of ICAN. "It's the recognition that nuclear disarmament is a humanitarian imperative, and that any use of nuclear weapons would cause unacceptable harm."

The resolution for the first time raises deep concerns regarding the "implications of any use of nuclear weapons for humanitarian assistance activities and food production over wide areas of the world". These concerns are confirmed by new studies showing that if even 0.4 percent of the world's current arsenals were exploded in a regional war, clouds of radioactive dust in the atmosphere would cause abrupt climate change, freezing temperatures and agricultural collapse, resulting in global famine, disease and millions of additional deaths.

"This historic vote is a giant step forward for the move to abolish all nuclear weapons," commented Dr. Ira Helfand, North American Vice-President, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), a founding member of ICAN. "Red Cross and Red Crescent societies are uniquely positioned to educate the public about the dangers of nuclear war so that people understand the full nature of the humanitarian disaster that would follow even the limited use of these weapons."

More than one year ago, addressing diplomats at the ICRC's headquarters in Geneva, the organisation's president Jakob Kellenberger declared that "Nations have a historic and unprecedented opportunity to bring the era of nuclear weapons to an end". The adoption of this resolution and the concerns it raises confirm that the world cannot afford to wait.

As noted by the President of ICAN for Europe, Africa and the Middle East, Dr Rebecca Johnson: "It is not a matter of 'if' nuclear weapons will be banned, it's only a matter of 'when'. With nuclear dangers increasing daily, governments need to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons ban as a matter of urgency. We can't keep letting the nuclear-armed states create obstacles to disarmament while more countries like North Korea and Iran get nuclear weapon capabilities."

Source: <http://www.icanw.org/node/5810>



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Call from Niono, Mali [<http://www.icanw.org/node/5772>]

Against Nuclear Power and for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons

[3 November 2011] - The recent explosion of the plant in Fukushima, Japan, in 2011 brings back on the agenda the issue of nuclear power and uranium mining in Africa.

Africa cannot be indifferent to this issue given the fact that it is actively involved in the nuclear industry because of the many uranium resources that nature has provided to the continent.

For the African people participating in the 10th Forum of the Peoples in Niono, whose goal is to urge the G20 to make more sustainable choices, Fukushima is a sad reminder of the horrific consequences of the exploitation of uranium at the expense of the African people.

To fuel nuclear power plants and nuclear weapons programs worldwide, the people of Niger, Mali, Guinea, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia and so on are sacrificed in a perpetual quest for profit.

The African people see the land of their ancestors kidnapped, their homes and forests destroyed by European, US and Chinese industries, as a consequence of the agreements signed by their governments despite the ratification of the Pelindaba Treaty.

Radiation and polluted spaces are never included in the operational costs of uranium mining in Africa. Adverse and long-term radioactive effects on the workers' health and most widely on the population are endured by the African states, which however receive back only very limited financial resources from the exploitation of the mines.

This is the result of neo-colonial agreements, which bind them to some countries, in particular France and China.

The energy crisis faced by many African countries, which is the consequence of the collapse of World Bank-funded dam projects, is the pretext used by multinationals to promote nuclear power plants in Africa, singling out green energy projects.

The African peoples meeting in Niono strongly condemns these outrageously expensive projects and supports those endeavors fostering renewable energy and social sustainability.

In addition, the arms race fuelled by the countries possessing nuclear weapons and their allies is an obstacle to the fair distribution of resources needed to address the urgent necessities of the people.

The African peoples gathered at the Forum of Peoples in Niono (Mali):

- Reaffirm their opposition to the development of any nuclear project in Africa for whichever purpose whether civil or military;
- Support the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons;
- Call on the African states to take concrete measures to put an end to the production of all weapons of mass destruction in order to protect the peoples and the nature;
- Demand the establishment of an independent commission of the African Union with the task of surveying the environmental consequences of uranium mining in Africa;
- Demand the end of all neo-colonial agreements on uranium mining in the African continent, which go against the interests of the peoples of Africa;
- Demand the establishment of a Global Fund for the development of renewable and sustainable energy in Africa, avoiding the spread of nuclear energy and request of new loans to the World Bank;
- Call on those African countries who possess uranium resources to provide concrete plans to free their economy from the dependence on uranium mining, in order to put an end to the environmental and health harm that these activities causes;
- Call on the African states to legislate within the African Union against the exploitation of uranium in Africa;
- Demand compensation from multinationals for the environmental damage caused by 50 years of uranium mining in the continent, which constitutes an ecological debt vis-à-vis the peoples of the South;
- Demand compensations for all the workers and irradiated victims from those activities not in compliance with regulatory standards operating in the uranium mines;
- Call for the immediate closure of arms factories and their conversion to more socially useful production;
- Call on those African countries that have not yet done so to promptly sign and ratify the Pelindaba Treaty, establishing the African nuclear-weapon-free zone;
- In the Pelindaba Treaty spirit, call all African governments to demonstrate actively their commitment towards a treaty to abolish nuclear weapons.



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Is Nuclear War with China Possible?

[29 November 2011] - While nuclear weapons exist, there remains a danger that they will be used. After all, for centuries national conflicts have led to wars, with nations employing their deadliest weapons. The current deterioration of U.S. relations with China might end up providing us with yet another example of this phenomenon.

The gathering tension between the United States and China is clear enough. Disturbed by China's growing economic and military strength, the U.S. government recently challenged China's claims in the South China Sea, increased the U.S. military presence in Australia, and deepened U.S. military ties with other nations in the Pacific region. According to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, the United States was "asserting our own position as a Pacific power."

But need this lead to nuclear war?

Not necessarily. And yet, there are signs that it could. After all, both the United States and China possess large numbers of nuclear weapons. The U.S. government threatened to attack China with nuclear weapons during the Korean War and, later, during the conflict over the future of China's offshore islands, Quemoy and Matsu. In the midst of the latter confrontation, President Dwight Eisenhower declared publicly, and chillingly, that U.S. nuclear weapons would "be used just exactly as you would use a bullet or anything else."

Of course, China didn't have nuclear weapons then. Now that it does, perhaps the behavior of national leaders will be more temperate. But the loose nuclear threats of U.S. and Soviet government officials during the Cold War, when both nations had vast nuclear arsenals, should convince us that, even as the military ante is raised, nuclear saber-rattling persists.

Some pundits argue that nuclear weapons prevent wars between nuclear-armed nations; and, admittedly, there haven't been very many—at least not yet. But the Kargil War of 1999, between nuclear-armed India and nuclear-armed Pakistan, should convince us that such wars can occur. Indeed, in that case, the conflict almost slipped into a nuclear war. Pakistan's foreign secretary threatened that, if the war escalated, his country felt free to use "any weapon" in its arsenal. During the conflict, Pakistan did move nuclear weapons toward its border, while India, it is claimed, readied its own nuclear missiles for an attack on Pakistan.

At the least, though, don't nuclear weapons deter a nuclear attack? Do they? Obviously, NATO leaders didn't feel deterred, for, throughout the Cold War, NATO's strategy was to respond to a Soviet conventional military attack on Western Europe by launching a Western nuclear attack on the nuclear-armed Soviet Union. Furthermore, if U.S. government officials really believed that nuclear deterrence worked, they would not have resorted to championing "Star Wars" and its modern variant, national missile defense. Why are these vastly expensive—and probably unworkable—military defense systems needed if other nuclear powers are deterred from attacking by U.S. nuclear might?

Of course, the bottom line for those Americans convinced that nuclear weapons safeguard them from a Chinese nuclear attack might be that the U.S. nuclear arsenal is far greater than its Chinese counterpart. Today, it is estimated that the U.S. government possesses over five thousand nuclear warheads, while the Chinese government has a total inventory of roughly three hundred. Moreover, only about forty of these Chinese nuclear weapons can reach the United States. Surely the United States would "win" any nuclear war with China.

But what would that "victory" entail? A nuclear attack by China would immediately slaughter at least 10 million Americans in a great storm of blast and fire, while leaving many more dying horribly of sickness and radiation poisoning. The Chinese death toll in a nuclear war would be far higher. Both nations would be reduced to smoldering, radioactive wastelands. Also, radioactive debris sent aloft by the nuclear explosions would blot out the sun and bring on a "nuclear winter" around the globe—destroying agriculture, creating worldwide famine, and generating chaos and destruction.

Moreover, in another decade the extent of this catastrophe would be far worse. The Chinese government is currently expanding its nuclear arsenal, and by the year 2020 it is expected to more than double its number of nuclear weapons that can hit the United States. The U.S. government, in turn, has plans to spend hundreds of billions of dollars "modernizing" its nuclear weapons and nuclear production facilities over the next decade. ➔



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To avert the enormous disaster of a U.S.-China nuclear war, there are two obvious actions that can be taken. The first is to get rid of nuclear weapons, as the nuclear powers have agreed to do but thus far have resisted doing. The second, conducted while the nuclear disarmament process is occurring, is to improve U.S.-China relations. If the American and Chinese people are interested in ensuring their survival and that of the world, they should be working to encourage these policies. [Source: <http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2011/11/29/is-nuclear-war-with-china-possible>]

[Dr. Wittner, Professor of History at the State University of New York/Albany, spoke about the impact of civil society on nuclear policy at IPPNW's World Congress in Basel this past August. His latest book is *Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement* (Stanford University Press).]

You Choose: \$105 Billion a year for Health Care or Nuclear Weapons?

By Tim Wright | Campaign Director at ICAN Australia

[28 November 2011] - In 2011 the nine nuclear-armed nations will spend an estimated US\$105 billion maintaining and modernizing their nuclear weapons, despite the International Court of Justice having declared it illegal to use and threaten to use such weapons. This expenditure—up from \$91 billion in 2010—casts serious doubt on the sincerity of leaders' pledges to work for a world free from nuclear arms, suggesting instead a commitment to retain such weapons indefinitely. Beyond the pro-disarmament rhetoric of the nuclear-armed states is the disturbing reality of a massive effort to bolster the world's nuclear forces, the consequences of which are potentially catastrophic. Nuclear weapons: at what cost?

The Global Zero group of ex-military and political leaders has calculated that the United States will spend US\$61.3 billion on its nuclear arsenal this year—more than every other nuclear weapon state combined and twice what it spent on foreign aid in 2010 (US\$30.2 billion). Russia is forecast to squander \$14.8 billion, China \$7.6 billion, France \$6.0 billion, Britain \$5.5 billion, India \$4.9 billion, Israel \$1.9 billion, Pakistan \$2.2 billion, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea \$0.7 billion.

The design, development, manufacture, maintenance, and modernization of nuclear forces divert vast public resources from health care, education, climate action, disaster relief, and other essential services. The World Bank estimated in 2002 that an annual investment of just US\$40 to \$60 billion—roughly half the amount currently spent on nuclear weapons—would be enough to meet the Millennium Development Goals by the target date of 2015. With opinion polls in nuclear-armed nations showing strong public support for the total abolition of nuclear weapons—and most political leaders also championing the cause—is it beyond time that these investments ceased.

The promised disarmament dividend

In the years immediately following the cold war, the United States and Russia dismantled several thousand of their nuclear weapons. Over the course of the conflict, the two superpowers had amassed close to 70,000 warheads—enough to destroy every city in the world several times. For a brief period in the 1990s, global military spending began to decline as both countries engaged in significant disarmament. Some nations expressed hope that the new order would result in wealth being redirected towards meeting the needs of the world's poor.

But the dividend never came. By the late 1990s, military spending was once again on the rise, and the September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001 caused it to skyrocket. In 2010, nations spent an estimated \$1630 billion on their armed forces, with the global financial crisis of 2008 barely making a dent in military budgets. Expenditure on nuclear weapons represents 6.4% of the total global military outlay—a sizeable portion considering that only nine nations possess nuclear weapons. ➡

[Source: <http://peaceandhealthblog.com/2011/11/28/health-care-or-nuclear-weapons>]



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With five of the nuclear powers having made a legal pledge to eliminate their nuclear arsenals—and the other four being obliged under customary law to disarm also—it defies belief that all are wasting billions of dollars strengthening their nuclear forces. By extending the useable lifetime of warheads for several decades—and building new missiles, submarines, and bombers to carry them, as well as new facilities to construct them—nations are undermining disarmament efforts and fuelling a new nuclear arms race.

A diversion of public resources

In 2010, foreign aid by wealthy governments to Africa, the poorest continent on Earth, was a paltry US\$29.3 billion, or less than one-third of the amount spent on nuclear weapons. As millions across the globe go hungry and are denied access to clean water and basic medicines, the nuclear-armed nations spend US\$287 million every day, or US\$12 million an hour, on their nuclear forces.

The US nuclear weapons budget is roughly equivalent to the gross domestic product of North and South Sudan (US\$62bn in 2010), whose combined population is 45 million. Total global nuclear weapons spending is more than the gross domestic product of Bangladesh (US\$101bn), a nation of 158.6 million people. Just one year of nuclear weapons spending is equal to 42 years of the regular UN budget of US\$2.5 billion or 14 years of UN peacekeeping operations. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon remarked in 2009, “The world is over-armed, and peace is under-funded.”

Money for nuclear disarmament?

The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs—the principal UN body responsible for advancing a world free of nuclear weapons—runs operations and offices in New York, Geneva, Lome, Lima and Kathmandu, with a total of some 100 staff. In addition to working on nuclear disarmament, it also addresses the threat of chemical and biological weapons, landmines, cluster munitions and small arms. Its annual budget is approximately US\$10 million—less than the amount the nuclear-armed nations spend on their nuclear weapons every hour. The global nuclear weapons budget of US\$104.9 billion is more than 10,000 times greater than the UN disarmament and non-proliferation budget.

National disarmament programmes are also grossly under-funded. US spending on nuclear warhead dismantlement has dropped dramatically under President Obama. In 2009, it was US\$186 million. This was slashed to \$96 million in 2010 and just \$58 million in 2011. There has been a corresponding decline in the rate of dismantlement, with an estimated 260 warheads taken apart by the United States in 2010 compared with 648 in 2008. In the 1990s more than a thousand warheads were dismantled every year.

US dismantlement work has been scaled back because the same facilities are used for disassembly as for re-assembly. Building new nuclear weapons from old warheads—a process the government refers to euphemistically as “refurbishment”—has taken priority over dismantlement. The United States now spends 1000 times more on the maintenance and modernization of its nuclear forces than it does on dismantling warheads.

US President Barack Obama, who won the Nobel Peace Prize for his nuclear-free vision, supports a major boost in US nuclear weapons spending over the next decade. His modernization plan includes the construction of three new nuclear bomb factories. The expected total cost is US\$213 billion, which is on top of the regular annual US nuclear weapons budget of more than US\$60 billion.

There is an alternative to this madness. With the global financial crisis prompting governments to cut funding to education, health, and other social services, citizen groups are in the strongest position yet to challenge nuclear weapons spending. Investing billions of dollars in these weapons of terror and mass destruction is an outrage in the best of economic times. It is all the more ridiculous and shameful given the world’s current financial woes.

We must put pressure on national legislators to knock back budgetary requests for nuclear weapons work, and persuade banks, pension funds and other financial institutions worldwide to divest from companies that manufacture nuclear weapons. It is not difficult to come up with better ways to achieve security than investing US\$104.9 billion a year in instruments that could turn the world into a radioactive inferno. ☑



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Advocating for Transparency in the Global Arms Trade

By Hakeem Ayinde, MD

[November 12, 2011] - I attended, with Cathey Falvo of PSR, New York City, a recent special event at the United Nations that addressed Transparency in Global Arms Trade. Having attended the last Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) PrepCom meeting in July as an IPPNW delegate, I found the topic very pertinent and also enlightening. Particularly interesting was the speech by the keynote speaker, Michael Klare, who is a professor of peace and world security studies at the Hampshire College, Amherst, Massachusetts.

Professor Klare discussed the relationship between oil and other natural resources, and the international arms trade. He explained how the pursuit of natural resources leads to an increase in arms sales, pointing out that a country like Saudi Arabia, for example, is the largest oil exporter, and equally the largest arms importer. These resource-rich countries are usually courted for their oil or other resources in exchange for arms by the major arms exporting countries. These arms exporters would forge relationships with the oil-rich nations wherein they offer aid, diplomatic support, arms transfers etc, in order to gain more influence and access to the resources.

Conversely, the Professor also argued that the presence of natural resources also causes countries to move to acquire more arms. This would be useful as a deterrent to neighboring countries and to secure their borders or as a measure to control insurgent groups within the country. Countries like Libya and Syria readily come to mind for the latter reason. Additionally, the pursuit of arms by resource-rich countries also affects social and economic development in these countries, as funds may be diverted from development programs to the purchase of weapons.

The reasons aforementioned beg for increased transparency in transnational arms transfer, which would improve international peace and security and also help us better understand the dynamics between the pursuit of natural resources and arms trade.

Also interesting was Magda Coss, an investigative journalist with significant experience researching violence in Latin America. She brought attention to the effects of armed violence in Latin America, which accounts for an alarming 42% of the world's firearm-related deaths, from between 40 and 65 million existing firearms in the region. A major obstacle to her work, she believes, is the difficulty in obtaining data on firearms traffic in these countries. This may sometimes be due to censorship by government, but more often, it is because the governments themselves do not have the information.

She urged a stronger role for the media in raising awareness on the consequences of firearms and also to expose the corruption and faults in institutions that promote proliferation of firearms.

Ms Coss also advocated for more transparency and responsibility on the part of arms exporters in arms transfers to developing countries, as the impact of this is palpable.

The failed operation of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF), nicknamed 'Fast and Furious', in which arms were introduced into Mexico in order to track them to their destination highlighted the irresponsibility of government and a lack of transparency. The firearms only showed up after they were used to kill people.

Mr Tobias Bock of Transparency International's Defense and Security program got a cheer from the audience when he introduced the newly revamped UN Register of Global Reported Arms Trade which now includes small arms. The website has been made more user-friendly, and the information on arms trade more accessible. The site also conspicuously showed discrepancies in information reported by some arms exporters and importers. It is possible that the importing countries underreported the actual number of arms imported. This is problematic because defense budgets are usually shrouded in secrecy, and thus it would be difficult to verify the actual volume of arms transferred.

Overall, the seminar was highly educative and it exposed certain challenges that may be further discussed while we push for the adoption of an effective Arms trade Treaty.



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