



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION



NUMBER 09

A Monthly Newsletter for Strengthening Awareness of Nuclear Abolition

This page includes independent news coverage which is part of a project supported by Soka Gakkai International.

IPS, the global news agency, brings you independent news and views on nuclear abolition. In this newsletter you will find in-depth reports by IPS correspondents and project partners from around the world as well as columns by experts, in addition to special sections for news from international NGOs and a review of the global media for a glimpse of what is happening on the ground. Join us in helping strengthen awareness about the abolition of nuclear weapons – and encourage your friends and colleagues to subscribe to this free monthly newsletter.

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By Eli Clifton

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POLITICS-ASIA: Inter-religious Forum Calls for Nuclear Abolition

By Neena Bhandari

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NUCLEAR ABOLITION: Commission Spreads Tainted Joy

BY TARO ICHIKAWA

TOKYO (IDN) - Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and his Australian counterpart Kevin Rudd had reason to rejoice when they received and launched the report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), calling for a cut of more than 90 percent in the world's nuclear arsenals by 2025. <http://www.indepthnews.net/news/news.php?key1=2009-12-19%2017:54:12&key2=1>

PERSPECTIVES: Nuclear Power 'Yes' – Nuclear Proliferation 'No'

BY CLIVE BANERJEE

VIENNA (IDN) - Nuclear power is a dirty word for those who champion the cause of clean energy. It needs some guts, therefore, to take up the cudgels on behalf of the atom as an important source of non-fossil energy. <http://www.indepthnews.net/news/news.php?key1=2009-12-12%2001:39:58&key2=1>

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WASHINGTON, Dec 11 (IPS) - United States Envoy to North Korea Stephen Bosworth announced Thursday that his three-day visit to Pyongyang has produced no commitment from the North Koreans to return to multilateral talks aimed at ending Pyongyang's nuclear weapons programme. However, both sides recommitted to a 2005 joint statement in which the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea (DPRK) committed to dismantle its nuclear programme in exchange for economic aid and other incentives.

"As President Obama has made clear, the United States is prepared to work with our allies and partners in the region to offer North Korea a different future. The path for North Korea to realise this future is to choose the door of dialogue in the six-party-talks and to take irreversible steps to achieve the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula," said Bosworth at a press conference in Seoul, South Korea.

Pyongyang quit the Six-Party Talks - which included the U.S., China, South Korea, Russia, Japan and North Korea - and called for unilateral talks with the U.S. after the United Nations Security Council condemned nuclear tests conducted by North Korea.

Since April there has been little movement, aside from former president Bill Clinton's successful trip to North Korea in August to secure the release of two U.S. journalists held by North Korea since March when they were accused of crossing the border from China into North Korea.

Bosworth was careful to characterise his talks as "exploratory" and established a "common understanding" of the need for negotiations. But there would have to be further consultation with other members of the Six- Party Talks.

Pyongyang has come across as eager for direct contact with the Obama administration and Chinese officials have established that such contact was a condition for reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il to return to the Six- Party Talks.

While Bosworth did not meet with Kim Jong-Il he did conduct meetings with senior officials including Vice Foreign Minister Kang Sok Ju and senior nuclear envoy Kim Kye Gwan.

Bosworth said that he and his North Korean counterparts reached a "common understanding" that Pyongyang must reaffirm the 2005 joint statement which committed reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il to give up his nuclear programme in exchange for economic aid.

"There's nothing I see out of Bosworth's statements that addresses the DRPK's position that the movement back to the Six-Party Talks depends on the outcome of U.S.-DPRK talks," Alan Romberg, a Korea specialist and former senior State Department official at the Henry L. Stimson Centre told IPS. "How that gets defined over time will be very important."

"More interesting in a way, is the fact that they came to some common understandings on the need to, and importance of, implementing the 2005 joint statement [the DPRK] had previously said was a dead document and any commitments made in that were not valid and they did it in a way that at the time was fairly definitive," Romberg explained. "They have now, at the very minimum, apparently stepped back from that adamant position. But we don't know how much flexibility really is in their position at this point."

While falling short of bringing Pyongyang back to the Six-Party talks the apparent reaffirmation of the 2005 joint statement does suggest that Pyongyang may be willing to examine possibilities of exchanging the dismantling of its nuclear programme in return for various incentives.

Still, Bosworth emphasised that only once the Six-Party Talks reconvened and "gained significant traction" in dismantling North Korea's nuclear programme would Washington be ready to discuss incentives mentioned in the 2005 joint statement including: economic aid, a peace treaty formally ending the Korean War, normalisation of relations with Washington, and security guarantees. >>>

"One of the preconditions for the breaking of the stalemate is the for the North Koreans to see that there's no way to drive wedges between us and South Korea, us and China, us and Japan, and no give in our position. The private position is the public position," Richard C. Bush III, director of the Centre for Northeast Asian Policy Studies at the Brookings Institution, told IPS. "This was an important first step in reinforcing where our line was."

Success in attempts to bring Pyongyang back to the Six-Party Talks remain elusive but U.N. reports that North Korea had a poor autumn harvest and may be on the brink of another food shortage have given some analysts reason to believe that Pyongyang may be more willing to return to negotiations - in exchange for aid - than they were earlier in the year.

But this time the U.S. has made it clear that aid will be conditional on North Korea's return to the Six-Party Talks, and conditioned on Pyongyang not going back on commitments to dismantle its nuclear programme.

"... [W]e've said from the beginning, and this is something that's agreed by all of the other members of the Six-Party Talks, that we don't intend to reward North Korea simply for going back to doing something that it had previously committed to do, and that that's something we've seen in the past but has proved to be counterproductive in terms of our overall goal," said a senior administration official on Monday. "So there are no inducements or incentives other than the fact that should they resume the talks, then they would be in a position to pursue some of the things that were possible should they proceed with denuclearisation."

Bosworth will visit other members of the Six-Party Talks in Japan, China and Russia in coming days to discuss the status of the talks. ■

Q&A: 'Nuclear Energy Is Not a Solution to Climate Change'

Neena Bhandari interviews DR SUE WAREHAM, proponent of a nuclear-free world

MELBOURNE, Dec 9 (IPS) - As the threat of nuclear weapons looms large over the very existence of life on earth, Dr Sue Wareham, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons' (ICAN) Australian board member, is calling for a speedy abolition of these weapons and the rejection of nuclear power as a solution to climate change.

Speaking at the sessions on nuclear abolition and disarmament at the 2009 Parliament of the World's Religions here, Wareham said the power of religion should be harnessed to bring peace in the world through disarmament, abolition of nuclear weapons, eradication of poverty and action on climate change.

The six-day Parliament, which ends on Dec 9, is a gathering of religious and spiritual communities from different parts of the world to discuss issues relating to peace, diversity and sustainability.

A medical practitioner and immediate past president of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) in Australia, Dr Wareham believes that her work with MAPW is fundamental to her commitment to the protection of human life and the improvement of human well-being.

In an interview with IPS, she expounds on her passionate pursuit of a nuclear-free society.

IPS: Why is there a sense of urgency to abolish nuclear weapons now?

SUE WAREHAM: One of the reasons this issue is becoming increasingly urgent is because the five yearly review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will be coming up in May 2010. It is absolutely clear that unless there are moves there towards disarmament and clear signals from the nuclear weapon states that they are willing to take steps towards getting rid of their weapons, we won't be able to prevent the spread of these weapons further. So nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-Proliferation need to go hand in hand.

IPS: ICAN's goal is a Nuclear Weapons Convention, a treaty to prohibit the development, testing, production, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. Is it a feasible and achievable solution? ➤➤➤



Nuclear abolition advocate Dr Sue Wareham: "All weapons of mass destruction must be abolished."
Credit: Neena Bhandari/IPS



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SW: It is definitely feasible, and it is necessary. We are calling on people across the world to put pressure on their respective governments to promote a Nuclear Weapons Convention at the NPT review conference next year. We see the convention as the most promising route for the world to take towards nuclear weapons abolition.

It sets the same rules for all countries and that gets around one of the major difficulties at the moment, which is that there is one set of rules for countries that already have nuclear weapons and another set of rules for those that don't.

IPS: Is nuclear power, being carbon-free, the panacea for climate change problems and should it be a substitute for coal-fuelled power stations?

SW: We don't agree nuclear power is a sensible way forward in response to climate change. Nuclear power cannot address the issue of climate change. There are physical limitations to the number of nuclear power stations that could be built in the next decade or so.

Even if there is further development of nuclear power, it will be far too slow because it takes 10 to 15 years to get a nuclear power plant at a point of producing electricity. We need action faster than that.

Particularly important also is the links with weapons. We know there are definite links between the civilian and military fuel cycles, and that is a particular problem that will remain as long as nuclear power is there.

There is also the problem of nuclear waste to which no country has a solution yet. We regard it as unacceptable that this generation should leave our waste to future generations. The technological and practical reality is that we don't have any way of separating nuclear waste from the environment.

Our message is that the world really needs to put serious and significant funding into further promotion, development and implementation of renewable energies—solar, wind, geothermal and biofuels, which have been underused and under-resourced.

IPS: Has the United Nations succeeded in curbing the spread of nuclear weapons or is it held to ransom by permanent members of the Security Council?

SW: The United Nations General Assembly every year has a good number of resolutions in favour of nuclear disarmament and is really trying to push this forward. I think we need to distinguish the U.N. as a whole from some of its member states in the Security Council.

All five members of the U.N. Security Council have nuclear weapons, which is an extraordinary thought that we are entrusting the security of the world to the hands of the five nations that have the worst weapons of terror.

IPS: When it comes to possession of these weapons, aren't there double standards for the haves and have-nots?

SW: There are about 25,000 nuclear weapons in the world today in the hands of nine countries, and these nine nations really hold the world to ransom. What we notice is that a number of the countries that keep nuclear weapons are also most vocal about calling for other nations not to acquire them.

In addition to these nine countries, there are a group of countries, including Australia, which claim to be protected by a 'Nuclear Umbrella' (or middle powers lending bases, ports and infrastructure for the U.S. nuclear war-fighting apparatus, lending credence to the idea that nuclear weapons bring security), and we regard that as a problem also. For example, the Australian Government calls on other nations such as Iran not to acquire nuclear weapons and yet Australia claims that we still need to be sheltered under the 'Nuclear Umbrella'.

IPS: Why has humanity been so slow and ineffective in meeting the challenge posed by nuclear arms?

SW: Nations that have nuclear weapons have been allowed to justify their weapons by the theory of "deterrence," which is claimed to prevent wars between nuclear-armed countries. But it is a failed theory, because, as we are seeing, if some nations believe they have a right to these weapons, then other nations will claim the same right. It is a recipe for every nation to have the world's most destructive weapons.

What's needed is for all nations to abide by the same rule, which is that all weapons of mass destruction – especially nuclear weapons, which are the most terrifying of all – must be abolished. >>>



IPS: What can religious and spiritual communities do to meet the challenge of abolishing these weapons of mass annihilation?

SW: We see the issue of nuclear weapons as one of the great ethical issues of our time. It is an issue that religions of the world really need to come to grips with because nuclear weapons are the most destructive and threatening weapons to have ever been created.

Therefore, we regard people, who are interested and passionate about ethical issues, have a responsibility of calling for abolition of nuclear weapons.

IPS: As a practicing medical doctor, what drives you to take up the issue of nuclear disarmament with such passion, and what fuels your zeal to see a nuclear-free world?

SW: Nuclear weapons are so utterly destructive. They make a mockery of what we do as medical practitioners, saving one life at a time. These weapons threaten thousands of lives at once and even future generations. ■

POLITICS-ASIA: Inter-religious Forum Calls for Nuclear Abolition

By Neena Bhandari

MELBOURNE, Dec 8 (IPS) - For the global religious community, the use of nuclear arms is an overwhelmingly important ethical issue for the human family. Thus, nothing less than the immediate abolition of such weapons is needed from the highest levels, said speakers at the Parliament of the World's Religions currently underway in this Australian city.

The Parliament, considered the world's biggest inter-religious gathering, brings together people of various faiths to tackle issues relating to peace, diversity and sustainability. It opened on Dec. 3 and runs until Dec. 9 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

Its theme, 'Make a World of Difference: Hearing each other, Healing the earth', reflects the urgent need for religious and civil society groups to act on crucial issues threatening the world's survival, nuclear arms being one of them.

Considered the most significant human-made destructive force on the planet, nuclear devices pose a spiritual as well as existential threat to humanity, participants said.

"The time for us to act decisively is now," said Dr Sue Wareham, immediate past president of the Medical Association for Prevention of War in Australia, and Australian Board Member of the international campaign to abolish Nuclear weapons (ICAN).

Noting that the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) will have its five-yearly review in May 2010, Wareham said, "Progress towards nuclear disarmament will be critical at this meeting if we are to prevent further spread of the weapons, which should no longer be seen as status symbols or legitimate military weapons, but rather they should be seen for what they are —illegal and inhumane instruments of terror."

ICAN's goal is the adoption of a Nuclear Weapons Convention, a treaty to prohibit the development, testing, production, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons.

"Such a treaty is feasible and necessary," Wareham said during the session on 'The necessity of nuclear disarmament and steps toward its achievement'. "It is about reclaiming the right of every person to live free from fear of nuclear holocaust. This is a human rights, environmental, economic, health, political and security issue and above all it is an ethical issue."

In June, the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon stressed that nuclear disarmament is "the most urgent political problem" that the world faces. In September, the first ever U.N. Security Council Summit on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament resolved to "create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Non-Proliferation Treaty". >>>



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Many civil society organisations around the world have galvanised to ensure that the 2010 NPT review sees real progress. "We need a massive global uprising against nuclear weapons as was done to abolish slavery, to save humanity from annihilation," said Ibrahim Ramey, director of the Human and Civil Rights Division at Muslim American Society (MAS) Freedom Foundation in Washington, D.C.

MAS Freedom has adopted the support of global nuclear abolition as one of the 12 points of its national (United States) legislative agenda for 2008-2012. "In light of the revelation of the Quran and the need to affirm the most positive of Muslim social values, we must demand the abolition of nuclear weapons, and the conversion of massive nuclear (and conventional) military spending into resources for social uplift and the sustaining of human life," Ramey said.

In 2008, the United States spent some 52.4 billion U.S. dollars for the maintenance of its nuclear arsenal while more than 37 million Americans live in poverty and nearly 50 million live without health insurance.

"Relatively new nuclear weapons states like India and Pakistan are both immersed in great levels of persistent poverty and insecurity while they devote scarce resources to building dangerous and unsustainable nuclear arsenals that can never be used without the certainty of inevitable mutual annihilation," Ramey pointed out.

Ramey called on the global community to get involved in networks pushing for nuclear abolition and put pressure on national governments to support the NPT. He said Article 6 of the treaty specifically compels the nuclear weapons signatory states to enter into negotiation for the eventual abolition of nuclear weapons.

He likewise urged nations to encourage bilateral declarations of "no first use" by states parties to global conflicts, especially in the ongoing hostilities and disagreements between Israel and Iran, and India and Pakistan.

In the U.S., Ramey said, "We are calling for an executive order by President Barack Obama to de-alert U.S. nuclear forces by separating nuclear warheads from strategic missile delivery systems, thus reducing the danger of an accidental nuclear launch against potential adversaries."

He said people of all faiths and non-faith must support organisations like Soka Gakkai International (SGI) in their efforts to intensify the campaign against nuclear arms. In 2007 SGI launched its "People's Decade for Nuclear Abolition" initiative to rouse public opinion and help create a global grassroots network of people dedicated to abolishing nuclear weapons.

The Tokyo-based SGI, a Buddhist association with over 12 million members in 192 countries and one of the world's longstanding advocates of nuclear disarmament, has intensified its global campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons. The campaign, which began in 1957, has picked up steam following President Obama's public declaration that the "United States (the only country to launch a military strike with nuclear weapons) will take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons." "While we need states and governments to take responsible action to reduce the nuclear threat, civil society clearly has an important role to play," said Hirotsugu Terasaki, SGI's executive director of the office of peace affairs in Tokyo.

"In an ultimate sense, nuclear arms are product of and made possible by a particular form of human egotism—the self-centredness that is ready to sacrifice others in order to protect our own interests or society. Unless we uncover and disarm this aspect of the human heart, a genuine and enduring solution to this threat of nuclear arms will not be possible," Terasaki added.

At the heart of the SGI's nuclear abolition efforts is the desire to appeal to people's better nature and to restore confidence in the power of dialogue. Terasaki argued that "the logic of states and their competing interests would lead to the conclusion that the possession of such weapons enhances a state's security position." Yet civil society "refuted this logic, stressing the injustice of weapons that harm non-combatants more than soldiers and continue to do so long after a conflict has officially ended."

Various religious communities, like SGI, have engaged in an extensive range of grassroots activities, petition drives, and developed educational tools, including volumes of nuclear survivors' testimonies, DVDs and publications showing what individuals can do to mobilise public opinion for global nuclear disarmament.

Speaking on 'Nuclear Weapons Abolition: Response and Advocacy by Religious Communities', Kimiaki Kawai, program director for Peace Affairs at SGI, expressed belief that "the initiatives for nuclear abolition should not be driven by passive, negative emotions such as fear or guilt." Instead, they should become "a positive endeavour to build a culture of peace motivated by human conscience and high moral concerns." ■

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NUCLEAR ABOLITION: Commission Spreads Tainted Joy

BY TARO ICHIKAWA

TOKYO (IDN) - Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama and his Australian counterpart Kevin Rudd had reason to rejoice when they received and launched the report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), calling for a cut of more than 90 percent in the world's nuclear arsenals by 2025.

Sponsored by both governments, the Commission -- co-chaired by Gareth Evans and Yoriko Kawaguchi, former Australian and Japanese foreign ministers -- had finished its much awaited report five months ahead of the landmark conference on review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) next May in New York.

But the two prime ministers' joy was adulterated by a barrage of criticism of the report by civil society organisations from Japan, Australia and other parts of the world. The report was written by a 15-member panel headed by Evans and Kawaguchi, and represents consensus achieved in the Commission.



ICNND Photo: [Left to Right] Commission co-chair Gareth Evans, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd of Australia, Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama of Japan, Commission co-chair Ms Yoriko Kawaguchi at the launch of the report in Tokyo.

The significance of the 332-page document titled 'Eliminating Nuclear Threats - A Practical Agenda for Global Policymakers' lies in the fact that twenty years after the end of the Cold War there are at least 23,000 nuclear warheads with a combined blast capacity equivalent to 150,000 Hiroshima bombs. U.S. and Russia together have over 22,000, and France, Britain, China, India, Pakistan and Israel around 1,000 between them.

Nearly half of all warheads are still operationally deployed, and the U.S. and Russia each have over 2,000 weapons on dangerously high alert, ready to be launched immediately -- within a decision window of just 4-8 minutes for each president -- in the event of perceived attack. The command and control systems of the Cold War years were repeatedly strained by mistakes and false alarms.

With this in view, Hatoyama said the report -- released Dec 15 in Tokyo -- was "a guidebook that will lead the world to peace is now complete, and this is really wonderful". Rudd called it "an important framework for discussions and debate on non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in what will be a critical year in 2010."

The 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, reviewed every five years, has been severely strained, the report says. The last review conference in 2005 was an "unrelieved disaster" with backsliding on disarmament commitments by key players such as the U.S. then president George W Bush, it adds. At the same time, nuclear states India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea have not ratified the non-proliferation treaty.

While welcoming the report, in a joint statement, Japanese, Australian and other NGOs say it "falls well short of our expectations" because "the pace of the action plan for nuclear disarmament laid out in the report is far too slow". Rather than adding to the global momentum for nuclear abolition, there is a danger that it could in fact act as a brake, they warn.

The signatories of statement include Tadatoshi Akiba, Mayor of Hiroshima, who presides over the 'Mayors for Peace', and his counterpart from Nagasaki, Tomihisa Taue. The two cities are the only in the world to have suffered from nuclear holocaust.

Other signatories include Nobel laureate International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and ICAN (International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons) Australia Chair, Associate Professor Tilman Ruff.

The biggest reason for their disappointment is that the report fails to draw a practical path to nuclear abolition as an urgent and achievable goal. The report aims for a "minimization point" by 2025, when there should be fewer than 2,000 nuclear weapons in the world. Beyond that, no process or timetable for moving to zero is presented. >>>



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"There is a risk that such an agenda might have the effect not of advancing the goal shared by the Commission of a world free of nuclear weapons, but of being used to perpetuate a world where fewer nuclear weapons are maintained indefinitely."

The statement points out that the Hibakusha (atomic bomb survivors) have in their testimony and in personal witness to the ICNND last October in Hiroshima, appealed that such a tragedy must never be repeated anywhere on earth. They proclaim that the use of nuclear weapons is a crime against humanity and that the human race cannot co-exist with nuclear weapons.

Scientists warn of the global environmental destruction and consequences if even a tiny fraction of existing nuclear weapons are ever used again. Recent international developments demonstrate that as long as some countries possess nuclear weapons, or endorse their value, other countries will seek to acquire them.

For this reason, civil society has been demanding a comprehensive approach towards the abolition of nuclear weapons. Mayors throughout the world have proposed that nuclear weapons be eliminated by 2020. The Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are calling for the consecration of a world without nuclear weapons in that year.

"Anyone who seriously listens to these voices can only conclude that the action plan laid out in this report lacks an awareness of the urgency, or a sense of the crisis we face," says the joint statement.

The ICNND report suggests that a comprehensive Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) will be necessary in order to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. The civil society organisations give the Commission credit for this recognition. However, the report relegates the drafting of such a NWC to sometime around 2025.

"Such a timetable is far too slow and complacent. The fact is that a model NWC drafted by NGOs over a decade ago has already been submitted to the United Nations by the governments of Malaysia and Costa Rica and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon has repeatedly called for UN Member States to seriously consider such a convention. This year a multiparty committee of the Australian Parliament unanimously recommended that the Australian Government support a NWC. What is required is for governments of every country, in cooperation with civil society, to begin working for a NWC now," the joint statement says.

DELEGITIMIZING NUCLEAR WEAPONS

The signatories warmly welcome that the report calls for the de-legitimization of nuclear weapons and recommends that the role of nuclear weapons in security policies be limited. ICNND recommends that, while aiming for a "no first use" nuclear posture, all nuclear-armed states should declare that the sole purpose of their nuclear weapons is the deterrence of nuclear attack.

The civil society organisations find it "significant" that a commission led by Australia and Japan, both of which rely on extended nuclear deterrence (the so-called nuclear umbrella), made such a recommendation. In particular, it was reported that during the Commission's deliberations, the Japanese participants resisted such a limitation on the role of nuclear weapons.

They will therefore be "carefully watching the actions taken by the Japanese government on this issue". In their view it is "totally unacceptable for government officials in non-nuclear weapon parties to the NPT to resist disarmament by the nuclear weapons states and threaten or imply that they might acquire nuclear weapons if the nuclear umbrella is dismantled in favour of non-nuclear deterrence and defence.

In a separate six-page response, ICAN Australia gets tougher. Although ICNND is intended to be independent, a well-connected enterprise sponsored by the Australian and Japanese governments, both U.S. allies, should really be more explicit on their role, it says. Says ICAN: In recent months it has been confirmed that the foreign affairs establishment in Japan for decades had a secret agreement to turn a blind eye to US nuclear weapons entering Japan, contrary to Japan's stated policy.

More recently Japanese officials have been actively opposing President Obama's nuclear disarmament agenda. It has become public that the Commission has also struggled with similarly recalcitrant Japanese influences opposing the U.S. moving to a policy of nuclear no first use. "This is deeply regrettable and troubling from the country which has suffered nuclear attacks on two of its cities." >>>



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"In Australia this year's Defence White Paper runs completely counter to our government's stated commitment to nuclear disarmament by affirming Australia's reliance on U.S. nuclear deterrence out to 2030 and beyond. And Australia's exports of uranium continue to nuclear armed states, with inadequate safeguards on its enrichment and no restrictions on reprocessing of spent reactor fuel derived from it," notes ICAN.

It adds: Extended deterrence does not need to be nuclear. A new Japanese government, with Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada supporting nuclear no first use, and Prime Minister Hatoyama speaking in support of the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, provides an excellent opportunity for a joint Australian-Japanese initiative actively supporting President Obama's disarmament agenda and a U.S. no first use commitment.

ICAN Australia says: "Both (Australia and Japan) countries should walk the talk by making it clear that they want to transform their alliance relationship with the U.S. to one that excludes use of nuclear weapons. This would be the most powerful action our two governments could take towards supporting President Obama and a world free of nuclear weapons. It would be influential globally, including for NATO."

NUCLEAR POWER – 'NO'

The ICNND report refers to the threat of nuclear terrorism and the risks associated with peaceful uses of nuclear energy. However, the civil society organisations find the specific measures proposed for controlling materials and technology that can be diverted to nuclear weapons, including uranium and plutonium, "inadequate".

The report was released just as COP 15 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was being held in Copenhagen. "At a time when the world's energy policies are at a turning point due to global warming, much stronger measures are called for to deal with the risk of nuclear proliferation associated with nuclear energy."

ICAN Australia Chair, Associate Professor Tilman Ruff said: "The Commission's brazen promotion of nuclear power sits uneasily with its recognition of the need to control the inherently dual-use processes of uranium enrichment and reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel to extract plutonium. It is contradictory for the Commission to promote nuclear power, exacerbating proliferation dangers, without adequately addressing the current failures of the non-proliferation regime and demonstrating how they can be fixed."

ICAN Australia's position is that achieving and sustaining a world free of nuclear weapons would be much easier and quicker in a world in which nuclear power was being phased out. However while nuclear power is used, the industry needs a major overhaul so that uranium enrichment only occurs under strict international supervision, and reprocessing of spent reactor fuel to extract plutonium ceases.

ICAN believes that reducing the role of nuclear weapons in security policies - preparing and working for a world without nuclear weapons – is the responsibility of all countries, not only the nuclear-armed states. Allies of nuclear armed states bear particular responsibilities.

PRE-EMPTING CRITICISM

Pre-empting expected criticism, the two ICNND co-chairs however say that when they were assigned the task of leading this Commission in July 2008, they saw its task as being primarily to energize a high-level international debate -- "to try to reverse the sleepwalk into which international nuclear policy had largely fallen since the burst of arms control energy that accompanied and immediately followed the end of the Cold War".

In particular they saw their task "to try to ensure that there would be no repetition" at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference scheduled for May 2010 of the failure of its predecessor in 2005, and the World Summit of that year, to agree on anything at all.

There had been the beginnings of a new debate with the publication of the Shultz-Perry-Kissinger-Nunn "gang of four" article in January 2007, arguing from a hard-headed realist perspective that nuclear weapons had outlived any usefulness they might have had, but in mid-2008 global policymakers were still not focusing.

By the beginning of 2009, however, things had changed. Newly elected U.S. President Barack Obama launched a series of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and security initiatives -- to which President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia, in particular, was immediately responsive -- and nuclear issues were squarely back on the global agenda. (IDN-InDepthNews/19.12.09)

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PERSPECTIVES: Nuclear Power 'Yes' – Nuclear Proliferation 'No'

BY CLIVE BANERJEE



◀ IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano

VIENNA (IDN) - Nuclear power is a dirty word for those who champion the cause of clean energy. It needs some guts, therefore, to take up the cudgels on behalf of the atom as an important source of non-fossil energy.

This is precisely what Yukiya Amano, the veteran Japanese diplomat, did on Dec. 9, seven days after taking charge of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Amano told member delegations of 151 countries that nuclear energy was enjoying "growing acceptance as a stable and clean source of energy that can help to mitigate the impact of global warming".

These remarks came within two days of the start of the historical climate change conference in Denmark's capital Copenhagen where developing countries and emerging economies were locking horns with the industrialised countries.

"Many member states have made it clear that they attach great importance to launching new nuclear power programmes, or expanding existing programmes," Amano said. "We have already significantly re-focused our activities to help meet the needs of newcomers to nuclear power. . . . I plan to build on our achievements and make the assistance we provide in capacity-building and other areas as practical and recipient-friendly as possible."

He then went on to say: "My hope is that, as a result of the Agency's efforts, member states will start to see tangible progress within four years on the path towards introducing nuclear power."

Though these remarks sounded out-of-date, IAEA's new director general was in fact providing an overview of the areas that will receive his special attention in the mid-term, keeping in view the statutes of the Vienna-based agency that was set up as the world's "Atoms for Peace" organization in 1957 within the United Nations family.

It is tasked with assisting in harnessing atom for the welfare of human kind -- instead of total destruction caused by the nuclear bombs dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States.

IAEA works for nuclear non-proliferation and enhancing nuclear safety and security. It assists member states "in meeting their energy needs, responding to concerns about climate change, helping to ensure food security and clean water and improving health care through the application of nuclear techniques".

IAEA's technical cooperation programme, which seeks "to make the benefits of nuclear science and technology more widely available is important to all member states", said Amano. "My intention is to continue to focus on technical cooperation so that we can more effectively meet the needs of member states, as identified by them," he told member delegations.

In this regard, the priority is capacity-building to help countries establish their own expertise in nuclear science and technology.

Amano plans to pay special attention in his first year to cancer control, and he will make his first official trip to Nigeria to learn first-hand about its efforts to build an effective cancer control programme, among other issues. >>>



BEYOND NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION



In January, he will use his participation in the World Economic Forum in Davos to appeal for focussed global attention on the growing cancer epidemic. Next September, cancer control will be the topic of IAEA's Scientific Forum.

In the area of non-proliferation, Amano sees his role as being to ensure that safeguards agreements are concluded and fully implemented, to provide member states with factual and objective information and analysis, and to act in accordance with relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council and IAEA's board of governors.

"The bringing into force, and implementation, of additional protocols are of vital importance for the Agency to be able to provide assurances about the exclusively peaceful nature of a country's nuclear programme," he said, adding: "I hope we will pass the threshold of 100 additional protocols in force early in my tenure as Director General."

Amano welcomed the commitment of the United States and Russia to making significant cuts in their nuclear arsenals and was pleased that they are reporting progress in their negotiations on a replacement for the START (strategic arms reduction treaty).

He said he was hopeful that 2010 will witness a successful outcome of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference next May, that progress would be made on the entry into force of the CTBT (Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty) and that negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty would commence.

In this context, he said, he also looked forward to reading the report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (ICNND), a joint initiative of the Japanese and Australian governments. The Commission held its fourth meeting Oct. 18-20 in Hiroshima amidst strong criticism from civil society organisations who suspected that it was drifting away from the goal of a nuclear weapons free world. (IDN-InDepthNews/12.12.09)

OTHER LANGUAGES [Translations | Adaptations]

GERMAN

Original:

POLITICS-ASIA: Inter-religious Forum Calls for Nuclear Abolition

By Neena Bhandari

MELBOURNE, Dec 8 (IPS) - For the global religious community, the use of nuclear arms is an overwhelmingly important ethical issue for the human family. Thus, nothing less than the immediate abolition of such weapons is needed from the highest levels, said speakers at the Parliament of the World's Religions currently underway in this Australian city.

MORE >> <http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49579>

RELIGION: Für eine Kultur des Friedens – Weltreligionen fordern atomare Abrüstung

Von Neena Bhandari

Melbourne, 8. Dezember (IPS) – Die Teilnehmer des 'Parlaments der Weltreligionen' sind sich einig: Atomwaffen bedrohen das Überleben der Menschheit. Deshalb fordern sie im Vorfeld der im Mai anstehenden Fünf-Jahres-Revision des Atomwaffensperrvertrags (NPT) religiöse und zivile Gruppen auf, verstärkt für die atomare Abrüstung kämpfen.

Das zurzeit im australischen Melbourne tagende Forum kommt alle fünf Jahre zusammen und gilt als die umfassendste Konferenz von Vertretern der Weltreligionen. Ihr diesjähriger, am 9. Dezember zu Ende gehender Kongress steht unter dem Motto: 'Make a World of Difference: Hearing Each Other, Healing the Earth'.

"Wenn wir die weitere Verbreitung von Nuklearwaffen verhindern wollen, muss es auf der NPT-Konferenz in New York Fortschritte geben", betonte Sue Wareham, scheidende Präsidentin der australischen Gruppe der internationalen Organisation Ärzte für die Verhütung des Atomkriegs (IPPNW). Die australische Ärztin, die dem Vorstand der internationalen Kampagne zur Abschaffung von Atomwaffen (ICAN) angehört, erklärte: "Atomwaffen dürfen nicht länger als nationales Statussymbol und als legitimer Bestandteil militärischer Waffensysteme gelten. Sie sind illegale unmenschliche Instrumente des Terrors."

Im Juni hatte UN-Generalsekretär Ban Ki-Moon die atomare Abrüstung als das dringlichste politische Problem überhaupt bezeichnet. Im September versprachen die Teilnehmer der ersten vom UN-Sicherheitsrat einberufenen Gipfelkonferenz über atomare Abrüstung und die Nichtweitergabe von Atomwaffen, im Einklang mit den Zielen des Atomwaffensperrvertrags Bedingungen für eine Welt ohne Nuklearwaffen zu schaffen.

Friedensarbeit muslimischer US-Bürger

In Melbourne forderte Ibrahim Ramey, der in der Friedensstiftung der 'Muslim American Society' (MAS Freedom) die Abteilung für Menschenrechte und zivile Freiheit leitet: "Wir müssen weltweit massiv gegen Kernwaffen mobil machen." MAS Freedom will bis 2012 in den USA Gesetzesinitiativen zur nuklearen Abrüstung anstoßen. Die für die atomare und konventionelle Rüstung vorgesehenen Mittel sollten für soziale Aufgaben verwendet werden.

Während über 37 Millionen Amerikaner in Armut leben und fast 50 Millionen US-Bürger nicht krankenversichert sind, gab die US-Regierung 2008 allein für die Wartung des Atomwaffenarsenals 52,4 Milliarden US-Dollar aus.

"In neuen Atomwaffenstaaten wie Indien und Pakistan leben große Teile der Bevölkerung auf Dauer in großer Armut und Unsicherheit", betonte Ramey. "Doch ihre Regierungen geben ihre geringen Ressourcen für gefährliche Atomwaffen aus und riskieren damit ständig die gegenseitige Vernichtung", kritisierte er. >>>

Atomare Erstschläge vertraglich verhindern

Er forderte die internationale Gemeinschaft zur Vernetzung ihrer Anti-Atomwaffen-Kampagnen auf. Die Regierungen müssten den Druck der Zivilgesellschaft zu spüren bekommen und dazu gebracht werden, den Atomwaffensperrvertrag zu unterstützen. In besonders konflikträchtigen Regionen sollte man zudem bilaterale Abkommen unterstützen, in denen sich die Staaten verpflichten, keinen atomaren Erstschlag durchzuführen.

"In den USA fordern wir Präsident Barack Obama auf, den Streitkräften zu befehlen, bei den ständig einsatzbereiten Atomwaffen atomare Sprengköpfe und Trägersysteme zu trennen, um das Risiko eines versehentlich ausgelösten Atomschlags zu verringern", berichtete Ramey.

Er empfahl Menschen aller Glaubensrichtungen, gemeinsam mit Nichtgläubigen diejenigen Organisationen zu unterstützen, die sich wie 'Soka Gakkai International' (SGI) dem Kampf für die atomare Abrüstung verschrieben haben. Die in Tokio ansässige, zwölf Millionen Mitglieder starke buddhistische Religionsgemeinschaft ist in 192 Ländern vertreten. 2007 hatte sie das 'Jahrzehnt für die Abschaffung der Atomwaffen' ausgerufen. Mit dieser Initiative will sie die öffentliche Meinung für ihr Anliegen interessieren und ein weltweites Netzwerk von Atomwaffengegnern aufbauen.

Angesichts der Ankündigung von US-Präsident Obama, konkrete Schritte in Richtung auf eine atomwaffenfreie Welt zu unternehmen, erklärte Hirotsugu Terasaki als Leiter des SGI-Friedensbüros in Tokio: Auch wenn die Verantwortung für Maßnahmen zur Verringerung der atomaren Gefahr bei den Staaten und ihren Regierungen liege, falle auch der Zivilgesellschaft dabei eine wichtige Rolle zu.

"Genau genommen sind Atomwaffen Produkte einer besonderen Form des menschlichen Egoismus. Wer sie besitzt, ist bereit, andere im Interesse persönlicher oder gesellschaftlicher Eigeninteressen zu opfern. Bevor wir diesen Aspekt nicht aufgedeckt und entschärft haben, wird es für die atomare Bedrohung keine wirkliche und nachhaltige Lösung geben", betonte Terasaki.

Wie SGI engagieren sich zahlreiche Religionsgemeinschaften weltweit für die Abschaffung der Atomwaffen. Sie nutzen Aktionen an der Basis, Publikationen und elektronisches Informationsmaterial, Bildungsinstrumente und die Aussagen überlebender Zeugen zur Mobilisierung der Öffentlichkeit.

"Initiativen, die sich der atomaren Abrüstung verschrieben haben, sollten sich nicht durch Kleinmut, Angst oder Schuldgefühle entmutigen lassen", forderte Kimiaki Kawai, der bei SGI für Friedensarbeit zuständige Programmleiter. "Vielmehr sollten wir unsere positiven Kräfte zum Aufbau einer Friedenskultur einsetzen, die sich vom Gewissen und von hohem moralischen Anspruch leiten lässt." ■

OTHER LANGUAGES [Translations | Adaptations]

ARABIC

Q&A: 'Nuclear Energy Is Not a Solution to Climate Change' (1)

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برلمان أديان العالم والتغير المناخي: "الطاقة النووية ليست هي الحل" | ????? ????? ????????? ?????????

Page 1 of 2



INTER PRESS SERVICE

وكالة الأنباء العلمية انتر برس سرفيس (آي بي إس)

برلمان أديان العالم والتغير المناخي:
"الطاقة النووية ليست هي الحل"

بقلم نينا بهنداري/وكالة انتر برس سرفيس

ملبورن، ديسمبر (IPS) - تلقي مؤتمر برلمان أديان العالم في ميلبورن، أستراليا، نداءات ملحة بأن تسخر الأديان كافة قواها ونفوذها لإقرار السلام من خلال نزع السلاح، وإلغاء كافة الأسلحة النووية، وإستتصال الجوع، وإتخاذ تدابير محددة لمكافحة التغير المناخي.

فطالبت سوي ويرهام، من الحملة الدولية لإلغاء الأسلحة الذرية في العلم والمشاركة في هذا المؤتمر السنوي الذي إختتم عمله في التاسع من هذا الشهر، طالبت بالتعجيل بإلغاء هذه الأسلحة، ورفض إستخدام الطاقة النووية كحل لمشاكل التغير المناخي.

ويذكر أن مؤتمر برلمان أديان العالم يجمع مندوبين عن الأديان والجماعات الروحية في مختلف أنحاء العالم، لمناقضة قضايا السلام والتنوع والإستدامة.

وأعربت سوي ويرهام، الطبيبة والرئيسة السابقة للجمعية الطبية لمنع الحروب، في أستراليا، في مقابلة مع وكالة انتر برس سرفيس، عن قناعتها بأن عملها مع الجمعية يلعب دورا جوهريا في إلزامها بحماية حياة البشر.

وبسؤالها عن مبررات مطالباتها الملحة بالتعجيل بإلغاء الأسلحة النووية في العالم، أجابت أن التوقيت مناسب نظرا لإقتراب موعد إجتماع مراجعة معاهدة منع الإنتشار النووي، المقرر في مايو المقبل.

"فقد أصبح من الواضح تماما أنه لو لم يكثف التحرك نحو نزع السلاح، ولو لم تصدر مؤشرات جلية من القوي النووية في العلم بعزمها علي التوجه نحو التخلص من أسلحتها الذرية، لعجزنا جميعا عن منع أنتشار هذه الأسلحة مستقبلا".

وأجابت سوي ويرهام علي سؤال بشأن حملة الجمعية الطبية لمنع الحروب، الهانفة لإبرام إتفاقية حول الأسلحة الذرية تحظر تطويرها وإختبارها وإنتلجها وإستخدامها والتهديد بإستخدامها، قائلة أنه "حل ممكن وقابل للتحقيق".

وشرحت أن الحملة تنادي شعوب العالم بالضغط علي حكوماتها للتوصل إلي هذه الإتفاقية أثناء مؤتمر مراجعة معاهدة منع الإنتشار النووي في العام المقبل. "الإتفاقية المقترحة تضع قواعد محددة لكافة الدول غير معيارين محددين، واحد للقوي النووية والثاني لغير النووية".

وعلي سؤال لانتير برس سرفيس عن ما إذا كانت الطاقة النووية هي الحل الأسلم لمشاكل التغير المناخي كبديل للوقود الحفوري، أجابت "نحن (الجمعية الطبية) لا نوافق علي أن الطاقة النووية هي السبيل لمعالجة قضايا التغير المناخي".

وشرحت أن ثمة عقبات فعلية تقيد عدد المحطات النووية التي يمكن بنائها في العقد القادم. "فحتي لو تم التوصل إلي تطوير هذا النوع من الطاقة بدرجة أكبر، فستكون بطيئة للغاية، فيستغرق لإستكمال إنتاج الكهرباء من محطة نووية من 10 إلي 15 عاما. العلم في حلجة إلي حلول أسرع".

وشددت سوي ويرهام علي ناحية أخرى بالغة الأهمية، ألا وهي "الصلة بين هذه الطاقة وبين الأسلحة. فالمعروف

OTHER LANGUAGES [Translations | Adaptations]

ARABIC

Q&A: 'Nuclear Energy Is Not a Solution to Climate Change' (2)

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=49596>

Page 2 of 2

أن هناك صلة وثيقة وأكيدة بين دورات الوقود (النووي) للأغراض المدنية والعسكرية، وأنها مشكلة حقيقية محددة، ستظل قائمة طالما كانت هناك طاقة نووية".

"ثم هناك أيضا قضية النفايات النووية التي لم تجد أي دولة في العالم حلا لها بعد. فمن غير المقبول أن يترك جيلنا نفايات نووية للأجيال القادمة. الواقع المحدد، تقنيا وعمليا، هو أنه لا توجد أي وسيلة لفصل النفايات النووية عن البيئة".

وناشدت سوي ويرهام مختلف دول العالم توفير قدر كاف من التمويل لتطوير مصادر الطاقة المتجددة، من الشمس والرياح والمصادر الجيو حرارية وحتى المحروقات الزراعية.

وأجابت علي سؤال عن مدى نجاح الأمم المتحدة في وقف إنتشار الأسلحة النووية من خلال جهود الخمس دول الدائمة العضوية في مجلس الأمن، قائلة أن "هذه الدول الخمس التي تعهد لها بالحفاظ علي أمن العالم "تملك أسوأ أسلحة الرعب والإرهاب".

"هناك حاليا نحو 25,000 سلاح نووي في أيدي تسع دول تحبس أنفاس العالم. ويلاحظ أن الدول التي تملك أسلحة نووية هي أكثر دول العالم مطالبة لغيرها بعدم إمتلاك أسلحة نووية".

"وبالإضافة إلي التسع دول هذه، هناك مجموعة من الدول بما فيها أستراليا، تطلب حمايتها من خلال "مظلات نووية" (أو دول متوسطة تعبر قواعدها ومرافقها وبيئتها التحتية لأجهزة حربية أمريكية)، وهذه هي مشكلة إضافية في حد ذاتها".

وضربت سوي ويرهام مثالا علي مطالبة الحكومة الأسترالية لدول أخرى كإيران بعدم إمتلاك أسلحة نووية، علي الرغم من إدعاء أستراليا بأنها ما زالت في حاجة إلي الحماية تحت "مظلة نووية".

وأجابت علي سؤال لانتز بريس سيرفس عن دور الأديان والجماعات الروحية في مواجهة تحدي إلغاء أسلحة الدمار الشامل، مؤكدة أن إلغاء الأسلحة الذرية هو واحد من أهم القضايا الأخلاقية في هذا العصر، وبالتالي علي الأديان أن تواجهها، فهذه الأسلحة هي الأكثر دمارا وتدميرا للحياة.

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CIVIL SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE

Australia's Nuclear Stance Must Go Beyond Deterrence*

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd joined Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama to launch the first report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

This report is important because for the first time, an American president is committed to long-term nuclear disarmament. Japan and Australia can and should do much to support Barack Obama. The non-proliferation regime has broken down and failure to take effective action at next year's Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review Conference will be highly damaging.

There is much to commend in the report. The goal is a world free of nuclear weapons. It has proposed a "comprehensive" action agenda to achieve this and notes the urgency for real action. It argues for a rules-based order with consistent standards for all countries. One of the great failures of the current regime is that the rules are applied inequitably among countries. That must be changed.

There are areas where we would like to see bolder recommendations. The US Nuclear Posture Review that is under way, which sets US nuclear weapons policy, is a critical litmus test of Obama's important commitment given in Prague in April: "We will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy and urge others to do the same."

Action by the US - such as a declaration of a "no first use" policy for nuclear weapons - would set the tone for the non-proliferation conference next year. On this point, the commission has not been strong, setting 2025 as the date for full acceptance of a no first use policy.

Allies of nuclear-armed states bear particular responsibilities. Australia and Japan, joint sponsors of the commission, need to be more explicit about their own roles. Recently, it was confirmed that the Japanese foreign affairs establishment secretly turned a blind eye for decades to US nuclear weapons entering Japan, contrary to stated policy. And it has been actively opposing Obama's nuclear disarmament agenda.

Australia's policies are equally confusing. This year's defence white paper, relying on extended nuclear deterrence to 2030 and beyond, runs counter to the Government's commitment to nuclear disarmament.

Clear policies from Australia and Japan would support Obama. Unless they do so, Australian and Japanese commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons must be in doubt.

A new Japanese Government, with a foreign minister supporting nuclear no first use, provides an opportunity for a joint Australian-Japanese initiative that supports Obama's disarmament agenda and a US no first use commitment. Both countries should seek to transform their alliance with the US to one excluding the use of nuclear weapons. This would not weaken their defence but would be the most powerful action they could take towards a world free of nuclear weapons. It would be influential globally, including at NATO.

Nuclear weapons have to be phased out, but having a minimum target of 2000 nuclear weapons by 2025 seems too relaxed. The steps beyond 2025 are not defined, an undesirable gap in the commission's recommendations. The failure of nuclear powers to move to disarm, an act to which they were committed in the non-proliferation Treaty, did much to promote the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

All parties seem to agree a nuclear weapons convention is necessary. The commission recommends that work start now, supported by interested governments, on refining and developing the concepts in a model convention now in circulation. There will be so many aspects to be covered. It should be negotiated step by step with the disarmament process itself.

We urge the Government to work with Japan and jointly propose to the US that our defensive arrangements be recast to no longer depend on the extended nuclear deterrent. This would be by far the most effective step the two countries could take to achieve a nuclear-free world.

*This article was first published in *The Age*. It is written jointly by Malcolm Fraser, a former prime minister of Australia; Gustav Nossal, a medical scientist; Barry Jones, a former Labor minister; Peter Gration, a former Defence Force chief; John Sanderson, a former chief of the army; and Tilman Ruff, chairman of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. ■

CIVIL SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE

Number of Nuclear Weapons Should Go to Zero

[En route to Copenhagen, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd of Australia is stopped off in Tokyo, where he and Japanese PM Yukio Hatoyama released a new report from the International Commission on Non-proliferation and Disarmament.] **James Norman and Dimity Hawkins* availed of this opportunity to write the following opinion article.**

The timing of this report is extremely interesting as it intersects with the Copenhagen agenda, the crossover point being nuclear energy. The report outlines some practical steps such as cutting the number of nuclear warheads from 23,000 to 2000 by 2025 and other practical measures designed to make nuclear weapons "invisible" in national security policies.

Rudd has a key regional role to play in a vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. If ever there was a time to push this agenda it is now, especially with the talks on stockpile reductions between President Obama and President Medvedev. However, like talk of reductions by the big polluters at Copenhagen, talk is not enough.

At latest estimates, the United States and Russia together hold about 22,400 nuclear weapons, which is about 96 per cent of all of the world's nuclear weapons. The remaining stockpiles are held in just seven other nations. But while Rudd presents himself as a champion of nuclear weapons and non-proliferation on the international stage, the undercurrent to watch is to what extent he will be simultaneously boosting Australia's credibility as chief uranium exporter to the world.

Australia seems to be working from the untenable position that nuclear energy can be separated from the nuclear weapons cycle. Australia doesn't have the bomb, but we have uranium, the vital raw material we export to help enable bombs to be made. Ostensibly we only export for civilian purposes, but we do so to a number of nations which have nuclear weapons, including the US, France and China.

In May 2010, the world's governments will meet again on the global issue of disarmament when they review the 40-year-old nuclear non-proliferation treaty at the United Nations in New York. Over four decades, signatories to the treaty have expanded to include nearly every nation. The conference will have an imperative to come up with actions, solutions and real ways forward for nuclear disarmament.

The non-proliferation treaty contains a commitment for the recognised nuclear powers to get rid of their nuclear weapons, and those who don't have them to never acquire them. At the same time it gives permission to countries to develop "peaceful" nuclear energy. But the treaty doesn't set out a clear roadmap for disarmament, and this has been a point of frustration in the negotiations for many years.

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear weapons and many other civil society groups around the world have been advocating for a new treaty to help focus government attention on eliminating nuclear weapons. A model Nuclear Weapons Convention has been in circulation for over a decade through the UN system, and is gaining popular political support from many governments. In September 2009 the notion of a convention attracted bi-partisan support by the Australian Parliament in a unanimous report of the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, which examined all international treaties on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. >>>



CIVIL SOCIETY'S PERSPECTIVE

The voices both from within and outside governments calling for a new convention or treaty that prohibits the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and outlines the concrete steps needed for complete disarmament continue to build. From Copenhagen in December 2009 to New York in May 2010, the global community is recognising that we must take responsibility for our futures and take action, back home and in the international arena. So while Rudd is in Tokyo this week mouthing worthy sentiments about nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, larger questions remain.

History demonstrates that the goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons will be much more likely in a world without nuclear power generation, because the material and capacity to produce nuclear power is intrinsically linked to the capacity to produce fissile material usable for nuclear weapons. North Korea and Iran provide the most timely points of reference. As former vice-president Al Gore has put it, "In the eight years I served in the White House, every weapons proliferation issue we faced was linked with a civilian reactor program."

One of the main problems with the current regimes concerning the export of uranium is that the barriers in place between the so-called "peaceful" atom and the "military" atom are far too weak. Fissile materials are highly enriched uranium and plutonium the key ingredients in nuclear weapons and their control is critical to disarmament. Why should a body committed to nuclear disarmament, such as the International Commission on Non-proliferation and Disarmament stop at a 90 per cent reduction in weapons? Why not go to zero? The problem with going forward with a 90 per cent reduction target is that it can be seen to validate nuclear weapons as part of security doctrines for a small nuclear club.

*James Norman is a communications adviser for ICAN and Dimity Hawkins is its campaign director. This opinion article was posted Dec. 15 on www.icanw.org ■



WHAT OTHERS SAY

Rooting for Arms Control

By Andrew Brown *

The first two Americans to win the Nobel Peace Prize were Republicans. President Theodore Roosevelt was awarded the 1906 prize. His masterly mediation to settle the Russian-Japanese war the previous year quickly erased his bellicose tendencies in Norwegian eyes.

The man who served as his secretary of war and then secretary of state, Elihu Root, got his prize in 1912. Root, a successful corporate lawyer of formidable intellect and brusqueness, was first named secretary of war by President William McKinley after the Spanish-American War to, among other things, supervise the administration of territories, primarily the Philippines and Cuba, acquired in the conflict with Spain. He continued in the post under Roosevelt and spearheaded some of the most lasting reforms of the U.S. Army, including the introduction of the General Staff and the reordering of officer training to effect the Army's transformation into a force commensurate with the nation's new status at the start of the century as a world power.

While a Republican senator from New York, Root was picked by Andrew Carnegie to become the first president of his recently endowed peace foundation, and the promise embodied in this new role certainly influenced the Nobel Peace Prize Committee. Other achievements cited in the awarding of the prize included Root's contribution to a "better understanding between the countries of North and South America." Despite these apparently anodyne credentials, Root was a hard-headed realist. This was reflected at the start of his Nobel Lecture when he warned:

"...the continual recurrence of war and the universally increasing preparations for war based upon expectation of it among nations all of whom declare themselves in favor of peace, indicate that intellectual acceptance of peace doctrine is not sufficient to control conduct, and that a general feeling in favor of peace, however sincere, does not furnish a strong enough motive to withstand the passions which lead to war when a cause of quarrel has arisen."

While not completely dismissive of appeals to humans' better nature, Root believed that any resultant inclination toward peaceable behavior was inevitably vulnerable to the savage forces that lay, more or less dormant, just under the civilized veneer of modern man. He was encouraged that the world had embraced the process of international arbitration as established by the Hague Convention, which he credited with settling 16 international disputes over the preceding dozen years. Each war averted reinforced a habit of peace.

What were needed, in Root's opinion, were regular Hague conferences to establish a body of international laws to determine the rights and obligations of countries. In addition, there should be efforts to educate general populations on the agreed, international, legal standards of conduct, since constitutional governments were reluctant to embark on war without popular support. Equally, Root recognized that there is always an attempt to justify acts of international aggression — "The wolf always charges the lamb with muddying the stream" — but he hoped that the advent of improved communications, expansion of international trade and more information available to the general public would lead to them passing sound judgment on the just and unjust conduct of nations.

How would an up-to-date Elihu Root apply his political philosophy if he found himself in today's U.S. Senate? There is no doubt that he would recognize the international tensions and complexities surrounding the issue of nuclear weapons, and want to strengthen the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that has limited the spread of these weapons rather effectively over nearly four decades. >>>



WHAT OTHERS SAY

There are two pieces of legislation pending that directly impact the future of the NPT. The first is the renewal of START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty), a major arms-control agreement initiated by President Reagan and brought to fruition by the administration of George H.W. Bush during the perilous break-up of the Soviet Union. The renewal of START is due by the end of this year and would represent a significant pact between the United States and Russia, which still possess over 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads between them. The renewal would demonstrate further progress toward nuclear disarmament, an obligation that the nuclear weapon states (NWS) have accepted under Article VI of the NPT and one that the non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS) are pressing to be honored.

The second piece of legislation is the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) that was signed but failed Senate ratification during Bill Clinton's presidency. The objectives of this ban are twofold: to prohibit NNWS from holding the tests necessary to develop nuclear weapons and to prevent NWS from building ever more destructive and sophisticated warheads.

There were two major technical reservations about the CTBT when ratification failed in the Senate — detection of tests and the necessity of future testing to assure the reliability of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. Since 1999, there have been steady improvements in the detection thresholds and coverage provided by global monitoring systems, and a review by senior American scientific advisers has concluded that the active cores, the plutonium pits, in U.S. nuclear weapons will show no meaningful physical deterioration for at least 85 years.

The U.S. has not conducted a nuclear test since 1992 so in that sense is already complying with the CTBT. Problems remain with the treaty, its organization bears the unwieldy bureaucracy typical of the U.N., but its purpose is crystal clear — to end all nuclear test explosions — a goal first pursued by the Eisenhower administration. The political process stipulated at the U.N. to bring the treaty into force may prove impossible, but even if there are a handful of nuclear-capable countries that refuse to sign or ratify it, surely the U.S. does not wish to be grouped with them.

Russia has ratified it and China, which has signed, is probably watching to see what the U.S. does. India and Pakistan have not yet signed, but again the United States may have a significant influence if the Senate finds the necessary two-thirds majority to ratify it. Obviously the more countries that ratify the CTBT, the more credible it becomes as a global norm, and the more condign should be the penalties for breaking the ban.

The ratification of foreign treaties in the U.S. Senate requires overcoming a high barrier and this is as it should be, since such treaties bind successive administrations and trump U.S. law. Any treaty involving arms control is especially daunting because of the imputed risk to national security.

Dwight Eisenhower was the first Republican to recognize that the achievement of an international system to restrain the proliferation of nuclear weapons would be well worth a minor abrogation of national sovereignty. It is to be hoped that the necessary handful of Republican senators will endorse the collective wisdom of predecessors Root, Eisenhower, Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush and join their Democratic colleagues in supporting START renewal and ratification of the CTBT.

President Obama may be the type of man, who Root said, occasionally comes along and through his "exceptional power of statement or of feeling and possessed by the true missionary spirit, will deliver a message to the world, putting old truths in such a way as to bite into the consciousness of civilized peoples and move mankind forward a little," but to really advance the cause of nuclear disarmament he will need to convince Republicans in the U.S. Senate to be bold.

*Andrew Brown is a research associate at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School and a member of the national advisory board of the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation. Published in The Providence Journal on December 15, 2009. ■



WHAT OTHERS SAY

Nuclear Weapons: The Modernization Myth

By Kingston Reif

The belief that the United States is the only declared nuclear power that isn't modernizing its nuclear arsenal is fast becoming an article of faith in nuclear weapon policy circles. As Arizona Republican Sen. Jon Kyl put it last summer, "Every nuclear weapons power--with the exception of the United States--is currently modernizing its nuclear weapons and weapons delivery systems."

From this belief arises a dangerous argument: U.S. allies and adversaries are adding new nuclear weapons and capabilities, while Washington is allowing its nuclear forces to atrophy. Opponents of President Barack Obama's nonproliferation and disarmament agendas are using this idea as a way of undermining his plans, alleging that by not modernizing, the United States is in danger of being surpassed by Russia and China. Yet these arguments are specious and misleading.

By narrowly defining "modernization" as the production and deployment of new warheads and delivery vehicles, an inappropriate standard is set by which to judge the health of a nuclear arsenal. What matters far more than the age of warheads and other equipment is whether a country has a reliable, credible deterrent. Viewed in this light, the United States cannot be said to be falling behind: Washington takes continual steps to ensure that its arsenal remains dominant, and indeed, its nuclear arsenal remains second to none.

That Washington doesn't follow the same approach to maintaining its forces as Russia, China, Britain, or France isn't a sign of weakness or neglect. After all, constantly churning out new systems isn't necessarily the mark of a more reliable, credible, or threatening force. In so far as the United States has pursued a different approach from other countries, it is because this approach has proven to be remarkably effective. In fact, a comparison of the status of the U.S., Russian, Chinese, British, and French arsenals and modernization programs demonstrates the fallaciousness of the implication that Washington is falling behind; it also undercuts the idea that the United States is the least active nuclear weapon state in terms of updating its forces.

The United States. Washington deploys approximately 2,200 strategic warheads and 500 tactical warheads and maintains about 2,500 warheads in reserve. It preserves and refurbishes its existing nuclear arsenal through a variety of stockpile stewardship and life-extension programs that have lengthened the life span and increased the lethality of its existing forces.

Both U.S. submarine-launched and land-based long-range missiles are now undergoing life-extension programs. For example, the air force will soon complete a 10-year, \$6 billion sustainment effort to increase missile reliability and extend the life of the Minuteman III missile to 2030. This program is somewhat akin to refurbishing a computer; the actual missile doesn't need to be replaced because the updated components are brand new. From 1997 to 2001, the United States also produced and deployed a new variant of the B61 gravity bomb. Known as the B61-11, it functions as an earth-penetrating weapon (i.e., "bunker-buster").

Since implementing a moratorium on nuclear testing in 1992, Washington has chosen to maintain and refurbish its nuclear warheads through science-based efforts to retain confidence in the safety and reliability of its arsenal absent nuclear testing. A recent non-nuclear refurbishment of the W76 warhead fitted it with a new arming, firing, and fusing mechanism that gives it a hard-target kill capability.

Such upgrades have increased the deadliness of the U.S. nuclear arsenal. At the end of the Cold War, a U.S. submarine-launched warhead had about a 12 percent chance of destroying a hardened Russian missile silo; the two types of submarine-launched warheads deployed today (the W76 and W88) can destroy a hardened missile silo 90 percent and 98 percent of the time respectively, according to one estimate.

Washington also has plans to develop a new class of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBM) and a new long-range nuclear bomber. The new submarine, dubbed the SSBN-X, would replace the current fleet of 14 Ohio-class submarines. In its 2010 budget request, the Obama administration requested \$700 million for research and development for the SSBN-X. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2019. >>>



WHAT OTHERS SAY

Procurement of the air force's next-generation bomber was scheduled to begin a year earlier, but in April, Defense Secretary Robert Gates announced that the administration would delay the program "until we have a better understanding of the need, the requirement, and the technology." However, there is a strong chance that the bomber will reemerge in the fiscal year 2011 budget.

These plans to develop a new submarine and bomber belie the notion that the United States is the only nation that isn't producing new nuclear weaponry. A new, limited capability to remanufacture plutonium pits, the core of thermonuclear weapons, also has been initiated. Along these lines, in June 2007, Los Alamos National Laboratory delivered a newly manufactured W88 pit--constructed with new materials via a new process--that was certified to be interchangeable with pits first produced in 1988.

Russia. Russian nuclear forces continue to shrink because Moscow is retiring older systems faster than it is adding new weapons. Today, Russia deploys approximately 4,800 strategic and tactical warheads. Although Moscow plans to cut in half its existing arsenal of 600-700 delivery vehicles over the next decade, it is extensively modernizing its older delivery systems. The newest systems under development are the Topol-M long-range missile and the Borey-class submarine with its associated Bulava submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). Russian officials had hoped that the Bulava would enter production before 2010, but frequent test failures, in conjunction with the recent resignation of the director of the bureau that's developing the missile, have thrown the future of the program into doubt. Moscow is preparing to begin to deploy its new RS-24 missile--reportedly a multiple-warhead version of the Topol-M--this month to coincide with the expiration of START. Russian officials argue that the RS-24 is central to maintaining the credibility of its deterrent, in part because it will be able to penetrate U.S. missile defenses.

Moscow maintains a robust nuclear warhead production capability, regularly remanufacturing each warhead every 10 to 15 years--a necessity because Russian warheads aren't nearly as well maintained as U.S. warheads. As such, they begin to suffer from age-related defects much sooner. As Victor Reis, assistant secretary of energy for defense programs, remarked in a 1998 hearing before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, "[The Russians] have a somewhat different system where they do tend to go back and remanufacture the whole system. Their system, as best we understand it, is perhaps not quite as finely tuned as ours. . . . They are very concerned about that issue."

China. Beijing's stockpile consists of approximately 200-250 strategic warheads. It is expanding its nuclear force, but at nowhere near the pace of U.S. intelligence estimates, which repeatedly have overestimated the speed and content of China's modernization programs. New Chinese delivery systems include the solid-fueled DF-31 long-range missile; the DF-31A intercontinental ballistic missile, which Beijing began deploying in 2008; and the JL-2, an SLBM variant of the DF-31. Development and deployment of these systems has proceeded at an exceedingly slow pace: China's decision to replace older, liquid-fueled systems with these solid-fueled systems dates back to the 1970s or 1980s, yet it is just now beginning to deploy them. (See "Engaging China and Russia on Nuclear Disarmament.") Beijing is also thought to be interested in developing multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles for some of its delivery systems, perhaps due in part to concerns about U.S. missile defense.

China has one Xia-class SSBN, and it is believed to have deployed one new Jin-class submarine in early 2008. Two or three more Jin-class submarines are thought to be under construction. However, it isn't clear how China plans to operate a sea-based deterrent, and no Chinese ballistic missile submarine has ever sailed on a deterrent patrol.

Like Russia, China maintains a robust nuclear weapons production infrastructure. As such, Beijing probably is manufacturing the warheads (based on previously tested designs) for its new delivery systems.

France. The French nuclear stockpile holds approximately 350 strategic warheads, consisting of two warhead designs deployed on four ballistic missile submarines and four aircraft squadrons. Since 1996 Paris has been modernizing its naval force, replacing its older Le Redoutable-class submarines with the newer Le Triomphant-class submarines, which carry the M45 SLBM. The newest, *Le Terrible*, will become operational in 2010 and will be the first to carry the more advanced, longer-range M51 SLBMs, which will replace the M45s. French SLBMs now carry the TN75 warhead, but beginning in 2015, they will carry the more robust Tête Nucléaire Océanique (TNO) warhead. Likewise, the TN81 warhead currently deployed on French nuclear bombers will be replaced with the Tête Nucléaire Aero-portée (TNA) warhead, which Paris began producing in 2007. France tested the TN75, TNO, and TNA designs during a final series of nuclear tests in September 1996. >>>



WHAT OTHERS SAY

Paris also is upgrading its nuclear bombers. Sometime next year the new Rafale fighter is scheduled to begin replacing three squadrons of land-based Mirage aircraft and a single squadron of carrier-based Super Etendard. The Rafale will carry the advanced Air-Sol Moyenne Portée-Amélioré (ASMP-A) air-launched missile, which will replace the ASMP missiles currently carried by the Mirage and Super Etendard fighters.

Britain. London is taking the least aggressive approach to modernization. Currently, Britain deploys fewer than 160 strategic warheads of the same type on approximately four Vanguard-class SSBNs that carry Trident II SLBMs. In late 2006, the British government announced that it planned to build a follow-on to the Vanguard-class submarines. But in July, it decided to delay the design contract until 2010--a decision that was made public as Prime Minister Gordon Brown unveiled "The Road to 2010," a yearlong, British-led effort to address key nuclear challenges in the lead-up to the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, including "progress in building the international partnerships we need to deliver a world free from nuclear weapons."

The sole warhead design in the British stockpile is based on the U.S. W76. British warheads undergo maintenance and refurbishment at the Atomic Weapons Establishment at Aldermaston, but it's unlikely that the establishment could produce all of the W76 components by itself because of Britain's heavy reliance on U.S. warhead designs and refurbishment technologies. In 2007, it was reported that London was preparing a design for a new "high surety warhead" modeled after the U.S. reliable replacement warhead (RRW). But since the Obama administration didn't request funds for the RRW Program in its fiscal year 2010 budget, it isn't clear how Britain can proceed with its high surety warhead.

Evaluating the arsenals. Obviously, the slow pace of Russian and Chinese strategic modernization programs neither increases the threat to Washington nor threatens U.S. nuclear dominance. Furthermore, French and British efforts to modernize their forces never posed any threat to the United States in the first place.

Nonetheless, some still argue that if Washington doesn't pursue a more robust modernization program, the United States will send the signal that it doesn't take nuclear deterrence seriously. These concerns are mistaken. First, the United States clearly isn't allowing its nuclear deterrent to deteriorate: Due to remarkable advances in stockpile stewardship capabilities and life-extension efforts, the U.S. nuclear stockpile and its supporting infrastructure remain the most sophisticated and modern in the world. U.S. delivery systems are more deadly and more accurate than they were during the Cold War. Both the defense secretary and the energy secretary annually certify the reliability of U.S. warheads, even though Washington conducted its last nuclear test 17 years ago. Numerous studies have concluded that the explosive cores in U.S. warheads will remain reliable for many, many years. Plus according to a September report from the JASON scientific advisory group, "Lifetimes of today's nuclear warheads could be extended for decades, with no anticipated loss in confidence by using approaches similar to those employed in [life-extension programs] to date."

Second, Washington continues to spend huge sums of money on its nuclear forces. A recent study calculated that the United States devoted at least \$29.1 billion to its nuclear forces and operational support in fiscal year 2008, including more than \$6 billion for the Stockpile Stewardship Program.

So those who continue to argue that Washington doesn't show enough interest in modernizing its nuclear weapons should be forced to answer a simple question: If given the choice, would they trade the U.S. nuclear arsenal for the Russian or Chinese nuclear arsenals? Clearly, the answer is no. The appropriate mission for U.S. nuclear weapons is deterrence. And the U.S. arsenal of more than 5,000 nuclear weapons has the capacity to deter any threat regardless of how many resources Russia, China, and/or any other country devote to modernizing their arsenals.

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