



# NPT NEWS IN REVIEW

Civil society perspectives on the 2015 Review Conference of the  
nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), 27 April–22 May 2015



Reaching Critical Will

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## EDITORIAL: UPRISING

Ray Acheson | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

A certain restiveness could be felt Friday evening at the United Nations at the close of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The draft outcome document was not adopted, though it was not this fact that seemed to bother most. The content of the final draft was unacceptably weak on disarmament, as the majority of those taking the floor lamented in their closing remarks, and the process to develop it was extremely problematic. The discontent was rather about why it had been rejected. Three states parties blocked its adoption behalf of Israel, a non-state party possessing nuclear weapons. If the month-long review of the Treaty's implementation and attempts to develop actions for moving forward had not already sufficiently underscored the depth of the Treaty's discriminatory orientation privileging nuclear-armed states, the Conference's conclusion certainly did.

"The failure on the Middle East leaves us in a perverse situation," said South Africa, in which "a state that is outside of the Treaty has expectations of us and expects us to play by rules it will not play by and be subjected to scrutiny it will not subject itself to." This could describe not simply Israel's influence over the Review Conference outcome, but also the NPT nuclear-armed states' attitude towards the rest of the Treaty's membership. The engagement by the nuclear-armed delegations over the course of the month was at times hostile, at times ridiculing, towards non-nuclear-armed states that were calling for concrete measures to ensure implementation of disarmament obligations and commitments. Their legal status as "nuclear weapon states" under the Treaty "is routinely translated into a language of permanent entitlement, legal rights, and international political legitimacy," as Dr. Nick Ritchie of University of York writes.

But the Conference has ended, leaving interested states now with the chance to pursue effective measures for nuclear

disarmament. Instead of a text that moves backwards in some areas from previous commitments and threatened to stall progress for another five years, states parties can continue to rely on the outcomes from 1995, 2000, and 2010 to guide their actions in terms of Treaty implementation. And in the meantime, there is also space for what the Washington Post describes as "an uprising" of 107 states and civil society groups. These states are "seeking to reframe the disarmament debate as an urgent matter of safety, morality and humanitarian law," and have pledged to fill the gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

When Austria first issued this pledge in its national capacity at the third conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, it might not have realised how much support it would garner only a few months later. The current pledge endorses come from all regions of the world and include some of the most populous nations on earth. These states now also have the support of no less than the UN Secretary-General, who has expressed hope "that the growing awareness of the devastating humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons continues to compel urgent actions for effective measures leading to the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons."

These governments pledging to fill the legal gap will not be alone. Civil society, from the broad-based International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) to the Transform Now Plowshares activists recently released from US prison for their nonviolent direct actions against the nuclear weapon establishment, many civil society groups, academics, artists, and others are demanding tangible progress on nuclear disarmament and fulfillment of the article VI legal obligation to eliminate all nuclear weapons and delivery systems.

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*Editorial, continued*

Many of these actors have argued that the most feasible and practical action in the current context is the negotiation of a treaty banning nuclear weapons. There is currently no comprehensive explicit prohibition against the use, deployment, or possession of nuclear weapons. ICAN and its partners believe that filling the legal gap requires a legally-binding international instrument that clearly prohibits nuclear weapons based on their unacceptable consequences. This would put nuclear weapons on the same footing as the other weapons of mass destruction, which are subject to prohibition through specific treaties. A treaty banning nuclear weapons would build on existing norms and reinforce existing legal instruments. It would also close loopholes in the current legal regime that enable some states to engage in nuclear weapon activities while clearly codifying the illegitimacy of possession.

A nuclear weapon ban treaty would strip nuclear weapons "of their veneer of legitimacy and substantially diminish the domestic political values assigned to these weapons." This "shift in the international normative context of nuclear weapons would begin to wither the roots of cultural nuclearism" in at least some of the nuclear-armed states, argues Dr. Ritchie. This culture is what has led to the growing divide over what nuclear disarmament should be mean. It has led to what Austria and 48 other countries speaking collectively in the closing of the Review Conference identified as "a reality gap, a credibility gap, a confidence gap and a moral gap."

Rather than "compelling urgent action for disarmament" as the investigation of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons seeks to do, the NPT seems to have been misused as shield against transparency and concerted action to fulfill the Treaty's objectives. It is this that South Africa referred to when it said, "There is a sense that the NPT has degenerated into minority rule, similar to what we had in South Africa under apartheid," in which "the will of the few will prevail, regardless of whether it makes moral sense."

The only credible way to fill the gaps identified by Austria and others is through a prohibition treaty that helps establish a framework for elimination of nuclear weapons. Perhaps most simply, the ban treaty is an instrument that can be negotiated now, even without the nuclear-armed states, with great practical and normative implications. And as Palau said in its closing remarks, the Humanitarian Pledge "provides a strong foundation from which to launch negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons."

All that is left now is for governments to find what South Africa called "moral courage" in order to begin a process to prohibit nuclear weapons. In so doing, they

will be acting as part of a broader movement of governments and civil societies seeking to build world that is does not rely on violence as the currency of power, but rather on cooperation, peace, and justice. "Despite what has happened at this Review Conference, there is no force can stop the steady march of those who believe in human security, democracy and international law," said Costa Rica forcefully in its closing remarks. "History honors only the brave, those who have the courage to think differently and dream of a better future for all." •



*International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons*

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Reaching Critical Will  
a programme of the Women's International League  
for Peace and Freedom

777 UN Plaza, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10017  
ph. +1 212.682.1265  
email: [info@reachingcriticalwill.org](mailto:info@reachingcriticalwill.org)  
web: [www.reachingcriticalwill.org](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org)

Editor: Ray Acheson

*The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom or the Reaching Critical Will programme.*



## DRAFT REVIEW

Mia Gandenberger and Gabriella Irsten | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

This brief only highlights changes from the last texts.

### *Main Committee II - General*

- Throughout the RevCon the main disagreements around MCII included how to refer to the Additional Protocol (AP); non-compliance; forums other than the IAEA, such as Nuclear Security Summit and United Nations Security Council; export controls; NWS reservations to NWFZs; and the 2015 Third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to NWFZs.
- These were the same issues of contention in 2010 as well, except for the reference to the NWFZ Conference.

### *Articles I and II*

- PP1 now includes language noting that “the NPT and the regime of nuclear-non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in all its aspects has a vital role in promoting international peace and security.”
- PP2 is mostly new and expands on the commitment by NWS (not all states parties as in prior text) not to transfer nuclear weapons or any other nuclear explosive devices, etc. to NNWS in accordance with article I.
- PP3 is new and reflects the NNWS commitment not to receive the above transfer in accordance with article II.
- PP7-9 are new and deal with pursuing policies that are compatible with the Treaty and full implementation of articles I and II and promote equal, full and effective participation of women and men.

### *Article III*

#### **Safeguards**

- Most paragraphs are the same but in a different order.
- PP11 includes additional language from old PP7 that compliance with the Treaty should be dealt with by diplomatic means and recognises that breaches of the Treaty undermine it.
- PP12 is new and deals with compliance of non-proliferation obligations and the importance of resolving all issues of non-compliance with safeguards obligations in full conformity with the IAEA.
- PP13 (old PP12) is reframed but still deals with available regimes such as UNSC, UNGA, IAEA, and UN Charter in upholding IAEA safeguards.
- PP14 is new and emphasises that measures should be taken to ensure states parties are fully protected.
- PP20 (old PP18) dealing with safeguard agreements and the Model Additional Protocols has removed

the assertion that APs “are an integral part of IAEA safeguards”.

- PP22 (old PP19) says that the AP, once concluded, is a legal obligation.
- PP21 is new and addresses bilateral and regional safeguards and how they can help in building confidence between neighboring states.
- PP23 (old PP20) now makes it more clear that, in addition to safeguards agreements, the AP is voluntary.
- PP29 is new and reiterates many aspects of PP18 and says that nuclear material supplied to NNWS should not be diverted for the production of nuclear weapons and should be under IAEA safeguard agreements.
- PP30 is also new and builds on PP29 saying that any equipment, information etc. should be consistency with the Treaty.

#### **Nuclear security**

- PP24 (old 40) dealing with the threat of terrorism and non-states actors no longer references UNSC1540 but now references all relevant UNSC resolutions and in additional also UNGA resolutions.
- PP47 (old 42) has deleted the first sentence that welcomes contributions made by the Nuclear Security Summits. The NSS is now included as an example further down in the paragraph as an international process that could play a role in the area of nuclear security.

#### **Export controls**

- No changes were made to this section.

### *Article IV and the sixth and seventh preambular paragraphs*

- Paras (P) 61-85 on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy (PUNE) and those on technical cooperation included in that section remain the same as in the previous draft, highlighting the importance of cooperation and assistance as well as the right to PUNE.
- Former P35 on human resources and capacities has been moved up from the section on nuclear safety and was included in the section on PUNE.
- Under multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, P70 on ensuring the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management was deleted.
- The remaining Ps are the same as in the previous draft and highlight the LEU reserve and bank, as well as the discussions of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle without prejudice to the right to PUNE.

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*Draft review, continued*

- Under the section on nuclear safety and security, P41 on the role of the IAEA and UN in nuclear security has been deleted.
- The remaining Ps remain as in the previous draft and highlight different aspects, conventions, guidelines, and mechanisms for nuclear safety and security, while affirming the importance of coordination between these two areas.
- Ps114-117 on the safe transport of radioactive materials highlight the record on safe transport and maritime and air navigation rights and freedoms. Further IAEA guidelines for the safe transport of radioactive materials are welcomed instead of endorsed as in the previous draft.
- Finally it notes relevant guidelines on cooperation between governments, encourages to continue with the positive dialogue process between shipping and coastal states, and notes the tabletop exercise on the issue.
- P118 of the draft document on attacks against nuclear installations includes a reference to Action 64 of the NPT Action Plan and the GC decision GC(53) IDEC/13 from 18 September 2009.
- The Ps on nuclear liability recall the instruments on the matter and welcome the entry into force of the latest one on 15 April 2015. Further they stress the importance of having effective liability mechanisms in place to ensure prompt compensation for damage.
- The reference to mechanisms on national and international level has been removed.

*Article V*

- P122 affirms that the provisions of article V of the Treaty with regard to the peaceful applications of any nuclear explosions are to be interpreted in light of the CTBT.

*Article VI*

- For a detailed review of this section please refer to No. 16 of the News in Review from 22 May 2015.

*Article VII***Nuclear weapons free zones (NWFZ)**

- PP156 (old PP52) is the same as before and therefore includes a reference to the Third Conference of states parties and Signatories to Treaties that Established NWFZ and Mongolia in 2015.
- PP158 (old PP54) now includes a reference that all concerned states to are encouraged to review any reservations to NSAs in NWFZs.

**South Asia and other regional issues**

- PP160 is a new introductory paragraph that ex-

presses concerns about other regions where nuclear stockpile pose challenges and therefore urges restraint and relevant efforts to help create the conditions for regional and global disarmament.

- PP161-163 deals with DPRK and is almost identical to the chair's draft from Subsidiary Body 1, with two small additions:
- PP161 calls on DPRK to "renounce its policy of building its nuclear force, which undermines the global nonproliferation regime."
- PP162 now includes "urges DPRK cease all its nuclear activities in accordance with UNSC resolutions."

**Middle East**

- PP165 is new and reaffirms that the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference remains an essential element and the basis of the Treaty's extension.
- P166 now calls on Israel "as a state belonging to the Middle East," as well as India, Pakistan, and South Sudan, to accede to the NPT to achieve universalisation. (Israel, India, and Pakistan were all named in the final outcome of 2010).
- PP169 includes some new elements:
- OP.ii: The new deadline for the MEWMDFZ conference is 1 March 2016 (old deadline was 15 December 2015).
- OP.iii: The conference aims to launch a process of "continuous negotiations" and "conclude a legally binding treaty establishing" a MEWMDFZ.
- OP.iv: Now includes "all other states parties" in naming those responsible for ensuring the conference is not postponed.
- OP.vi: Now says that as soon as the agenda is agreed, the UNSG will convene the conference within 45 days.
- OP. viii: A new facilitator should be appointed by the UNSG by 1 July 2015.
- OP.x: New paragraph and language emphasizing that the conference shall define "follow up steps leading" to the MEWMDFZ's establishment.

*Article VIII*

- The section on the review of the Treaty includes some changes compared to NPT/CONF.2015/MC.III/ WP.1.
- P4 of that document on regular reporting was deleted.
- The P on increased efficiency includes a reference to the length and frequency of Preparatory Committee meetings as a possible way to streamline the work of the meetings.

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

Mia Gandenberger | *Reaching Critical Will of WILPF*

The News in Brief is not a comprehensive summary of all statements. It highlights positions on a few critical issues covered during plenary discussions.

### Outcome

- States parties did not adopt an outcome document at the final plenary on Friday.
- Consensus was blocked by the US, UK, and Canada, who did not accept the section in the document on convening a conference on a weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East.
- Arab Group stressed the final document did not meet all its concerns, but it would have joined consensus.
- Iran expressed great concern at the US, UK, and Canadian statements and called on the president to suspend the meeting under rule 20 of the rules of procedures. The meeting was suspended and subsequently reconvened at 7pm.
- Most speakers regretted the inability to reach consensus.
- NAM, Indonesia, Algeria, Syria expressed surprise that these states were willing to block consensus to protect a non-party state.
- South Africa expressed concern with "the perverse situation" of a state outside of the NPT expecting states parties "to play by rules it does not want to play by."
- Russia stressed its disappointment at the failure to adopt the outcome document because of three states' objections, two of which are cosponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.
- The report of the credentials committee, the schedule of division of cost, and the procedural report of Review Conference were adopted.

### Process

- ASEAN expressed concern with conduct of consultations, which could have been more transparent as many small delegations felt excluded from closed door negotiations and parallel meetings.
- South Africa regretted the NPT has degenerated into a minority rule, similar to the apartheid regime in South Africa, where the will of the few prevails regardless of whether or not it makes moral sense.

### Middle East

- Egypt expressed its disappointment and was concerned with the negative messages on convening the conference for the establishment of a MEWMDFZ.

- Indonesia, Russia expressed their continued support for the MEWMDFZ.
- Morocco stressed that the 1995 resolution and the 2010 decision remain the basis for discussions.
- Australia, Germany, Singapore called for the future process on the MWMDZF to be inclusive.

### Nuclear disarmament

- Austria speaking on behalf of 49 states, African Group, ASEAN, Costa Rica, Cuba, Indonesia, Marshall Islands, Philippines, Thailand expressed concerns with the disarmament section of the draft text.
- Austria speaking on behalf of 49 states underlined that the last review cycle demonstrated a reality gap, a credibility gap, a confidence gap and a moral gap with regard to nuclear disarmament.
- Austria announced that the Humanitarian Pledge has support from 107 states so far.
- ASEAN, Costa Rica, Ireland, Palau highlighted the Humanitarian Pledge.
- Costa Rica called on all states to endorse the Pledge, join efforts to fill the legal gap, and pursue measures that will stigmatize, prohibit, and lead to the elimination of all nuclear weapons.
- Palau stressed the pledge provides a strong foundation from which to launch negotiations on a treaty banning nuclear weapons.
- Philippines called for a process on a NWC or ban treaty that will fill the legal gap on nuclear weapons.
- Ireland reiterated the development of the NAC paper on effective measures and stressed these measures to be effective, would require to be legally binding.
- Sweden stressed states should explore all possible routes for progress, inside and outside the UN.

### Humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons (HINW)

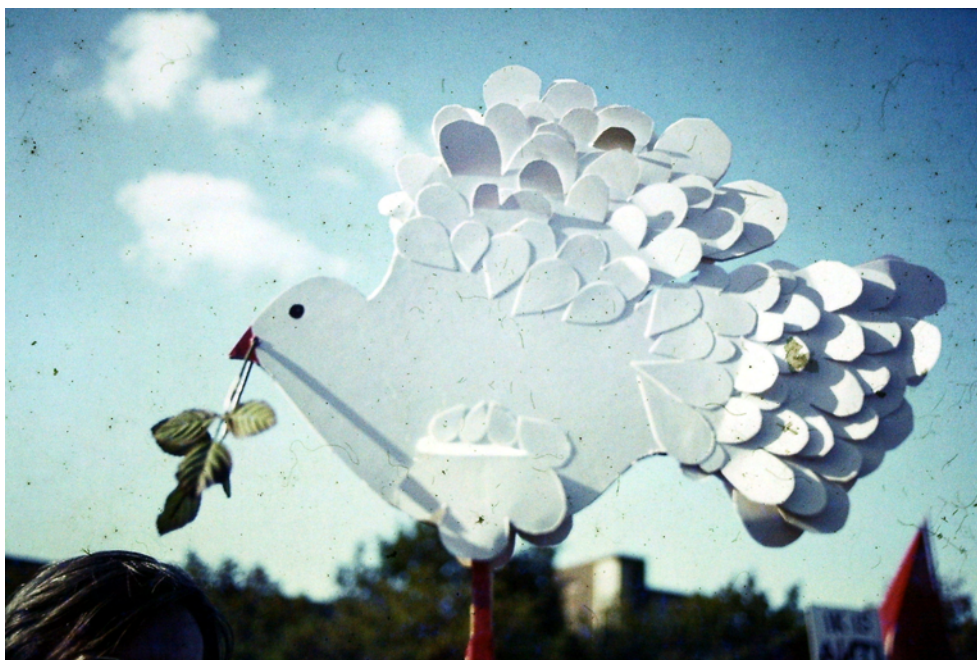
- African Group, Costa Rica, Marshall Islands underlined that HINW could have been more concretely recognized in the draft text.
- Ireland highlighted the new awareness on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.
- Palau stressed that the voices of survivors in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the survivors of the nuclear test in the Pacific and those of us at risk of annihilation from nuclear weapons today, must never be ignored, marginalized, put aside or forgotten.

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*News in brief, continued**Other issues*

- ASEAN was surprised not to see the result of negotiations on the text on NWFZs reflected in the draft text.
- Thailand hoped this would not set precedent.
- The Chair explained that seemingly no clear picture was reached and encouraged ASEAN to please check again with the Secretariat.
- China, Australia, Japan, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden, EU EEAS stressed the NPT remains the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.
- Japan announced it would host a series of meetings in order to maintain and further strengthen the NPT regime.
- Indonesia underlined that the failure to reach consensus will further call into question the incentive and credibility of NPT.
- France stressed the NPT Action Plan remains the long-term roadmap for nuclear disarmament and pointed to its record on that front. •

*flickr - Jim Forest**Draft review, continued**Article IX*

- In this section the one P from WP.1 was split up in four Ps.
- The welcoming of the accession of Palestine to the NPT now includes a reference "without prejudice to the positions of States parties".
- India, Israel, and Pakistan are called upon to adhere to the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon states without delay.
- South Sudan is called upon in a separate P.
- Finally states parties are called upon to promote universal adherence to the Treaty and not undertake any actions that can negatively affect prospects for the universality of the Treaty.

*Article X*

- This section was significantly modified. P10, 11, and 12 were deleted.
- The remaining Ps reiterate state parties' right to withdrawal, commitment not to reinterpret any provision of the Treaty, reaffirming the obligation to give three months notice including a statement of the extraordinary events, and the need for "efforts to uphold the objective of universality and preserve the integrity and credibility of the Treaty through following an incentive based approach by balanced, full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all Treaty. •



## THE NPT DISARMAMENT FALLACY

Kjølsv Egeland | *International Law and Policy Institute*

Delegates in New York fought for weeks over an outcome document to determine the next steps for disarmament. The first two weeks of the NPT Review Conference saw national delegations read set-piece statements, but the second part was all about negotiating a document that would have determined actions for the 2015–2020 review cycle. As before, disarmament was the most divisive issue this year. History suggests, however, that the adoption of these outcome documents does not correlate with a reduction in stockpile sizes.

NPT review conferences' success or failure is usually measured by whether or not the parties agree on an outcome document. After all, outcome documents are adopted by consensus, and consensus, by definition, means that everyone agrees. Consensus is difficult, however: the NPT parties have thrice failed to reach one (1980, 1990, and 2005). These occasions are often described as "failures," "disappointments," or even "disasters," because the nuclear-armed states would not agree to outcome documents that called on them to disarm. In contrast, "successful" NPT review conferences adopt outcome documents intended to advance the Treaty's stated aims of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and facilitation of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. For example, the outcome documents from 2000 and 2010 both "unequivocally" affirmed that the nuclear-weapon states should take steps to accomplish "the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament."

Before and during this year's conference, some governments and independent analysts expressed their hopes that an outcome document would be adopted. Many states insist that a step-by-step approach inside the NPT framework is the most viable route to disarmament and, as they like to point out, there are no "shortcuts" to a world free of nuclear weapons. This raises the question of whether there is in fact a correlation between the successful adoption of an NPT outcome document, on the one hand, and a reduction in the number of nuclear weapons during the following five-year period, on the other. In other words, is there really a functioning, multilateral "long road" to disarmament?

As it turns out, no such correlation exists.

A bivariate correlation analysis between the number of nuclear weapons in the arsenal of each NPT nuclear-armed state, and whether the preceding five-year period had an effective NPT outcome document, shows

results that are disheartening for those with a faith in the NPT disarmament process.

It so happens that the adoption of an outcome document in all cases is associated not with reductions, but with armament. For most of the NPT nuclear-armed states, this relationship is not statistically significant, meaning that the positive relationship between outcome documents and armament could well be random. But in the case of the UK we can confidently say that the adoption of an outcome document is systematically associated with armament: when the NPT adopts an outcome document, the UK's nuclear arsenal grows. As for China, France, and Russia, we can only be reasonably sure that the relationship holds. (Keep in mind the fact that China and France did not accede to the NPT until the early 1990s.) When it comes to the US, an outcome document appears to have no statistical association with disarmament whatsoever.

This admittedly limited statistical analysis nevertheless suggests that adopting NPT outcome documents is not particularly effective as nuclear-stockpile-reduction technique. With or without such documents, other factors determine stockpile sizes. And yet, the "success" or "failure" of NPT review conferences continues to be premised on the adoption or non-adoption of an outcome document. I suggest that this be rethought.

As its name reveals, the Non-Proliferation Treaty was intended primarily as a tool with which to stem the horizontal spread of nuclear weapons. It has done so quite well, and the NPT is indeed a valuable legal instrument in that respect. When it comes to disarmament, however, it is time to think afresh. A nuclear-weapon free world will need new international legislation. Seventy years after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it is well and truly high time. •

Note: An earlier version of this article containing descriptions of the relevant statistics appeared as a Huffington Post blog co-authored with Nobuo Hayashi. See [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nobuo-hayashi/the-npt-disarmament-fallacy\\_b\\_7306576.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nobuo-hayashi/the-npt-disarmament-fallacy_b_7306576.html).





## PROGRESS ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT HAS ALWAYS DEPENDED ON NON-NUCLEAR-ARMED STATES AND CIVIL SOCIETY

*Dr. Matthew Bolton | Pace University and Article 36*

Over the last month at the 2015 NPT Review Conference we have heard too many times that progress on disarmament “relies on engagement with the nuclear weapons states.” This usually comes from nuclear-dependent states, such as Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, and Australia, which are not officially nuclear-armed but have military doctrines that rely on US capabilities. Some even store US nuclear weapons on their soil.

But this conventional wisdom is lazy, lacks courage, and misrepresents the history of normative progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is beholden to the self-congratulatory rhetoric of the USA, Russia, China, UK, and France. It is an argument for the status quo, in which, as Costa Rica put it on Monday, 18 May, nuclear-armed states “pat themselves on the back” for their meager and slowing limitations on arsenals. Indeed the outcome of the NPT RevCon—with consensus on the outcome text blocked by nuclear-armed states but 107 non-nuclear states backing a call for nuclear weapon prohibition and elimination—shows where the momentum for progress lies.

In reviewing the history of nuclear weapons, the major moments of change occurred when those at the “fringes”—small states, middle powers, humanitarian agencies, human rights advocates, faith leaders and religious organizations, activists, intellectuals, and artists—spoke out, withdrew their consent, or moved forward on their own.

Many justifiably point to US President John F. Kennedy’s 1961 UN speech as a game-changer in the discourse about nuclear weapons, clearly stating that they “must be abolished before they abolish us.” But what is often overlooked is how much political pressure the US and Soviet foreign policy elite were under in the 1950s to end the debilitating terror of nuclear weapons.

Religious institutions like the Vatican and World Council of Churches issued strong condemnation of nuclear weapons. The 1955 “Manifesto” by Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell signed by prominent intellectuals around the globe called for an “agreement to renounce nuclear weapons as part of a general reduction of armaments” and led to the founding of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs. This was accompanied by a groundswell of social discontent, such as the Aldermaston Marches and the founding of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament—with its famous “peace sign” logo—in the late 1950s.

The momentum for nuclear disarmament was dissipated by the complete breakdown in trust between the superpowers during the 1963 Cuban Missile Crisis. However, it is worth remembering that Kennedy held back from escalating the crisis because the worldview of his civilian advisors had developed outside of military structures. The pressure to avoid nuclear war from civil society had been transmitted to the White House and ultimately prevailed.

Frustrated and frightened by an arms race that threatened the whole of human existence, during the 1960s small states and middle powers decided that they could not wait for the superpowers to halt their destructive spiral. Just a month after the height of the confrontation over Cuba, the UN General Assembly (where smaller states have a majority) passed resolution 1909 calling for “a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.”

The Latin American and Caribbean states went even further by innovating the first nuclear weapon free zone (NWFZ)—the Treaty of Tlatelolco—in 1967. Since then, the majority of states are now members of NWFZ treaties. Several small states, particularly Ireland, played an instrumental role in getting the two superpowers and nuclear armed states to commit to the NPT, including the article VI obligation to “pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to ... nuclear disarmament.”

Traditional theories of international relations—focused as they are on the distribution of bombs and tanks rather than the role of symbols and idea—has also often underestimated the effect that the arts have on shaping the thinking of policymakers. “Dr. Strangelove” did more perhaps than any UN panel or politician’s speech to undermine the faulty logic of “mutually assured destruction.” And President Reagan admitted in his diary that watching the 1983 film “The Day After” alerted him to the immense dangers of nuclear war.

Such artistic products both drew from and inspired further unprecedented levels of protest in the 1980s, including the Plowshares actions, Greenham Common occupation, and the million people who gathered in Central Park in 1982.

In the last five years we have seen the increasing coordination between disparate groups traditionally marginalized from global policymaking on security. The launch in 2007 of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) brought new public

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### *Progress on nuclear disarmament, continued*

attention to nuclear disarmament and galvanized a new generation of politically savvy activists.

ICAN has been particularly effective at organizing in coalitions with middle powers and small states, resulting in the three conferences on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons in Oslo, Nayarit, and Vienna. This modelled a refreshingly different way of talking about nuclear weapons, putting victims and survivors (both past and future) and the human impact—rather than outmoded notions of “deterrence”—at the center of the conversation.

And this is not just talk. There is now new impetus for action, symbolized by the Humanitarian Pledge—signed by 107 states so far—to “fill the legal gap” in order “to stigmatise, prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons in light of their unacceptable humanitarian consequences and associated risks.”

The late international relations theorist and nuclear weapons apologist Professor Kenneth Waltz once scoffed that it would be “ridiculous to construct a theory of international politics based on Malaysia and

Costa Rica.” He believed that if you wanted to understand the way the world works you only needed to pay attention to the great military powers.

But, as Costa Rica pointed out in a side event this week, the emerging field of humanitarian disarmament has shown just how blinkered this supposedly “realist” view is. Antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions were banned through a disciplined and tightly coordinated coalition of civil society, middle powers, and smaller states. Even though some of the major military powers have failed to sign these treaties, they have largely accepted the new norms.

Costa Rica and Malaysia are both members of the Humanitarian Pledge. They are precisely the countries to pay attention to if you want to construct a new, more humane, theory of international politics. Looking to the supposed margins—small states, activists, advocates, humanitarians, intellectuals, and artists—we can envision theory that instead of cultivating passivity ushers in a world free of nuclear weapons. •



Ed Hedemann



## CHALLENGING NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND “GLOBAL STEWARDSHIP”

Thomas Nash | Article 36

The way in which the nuclear-armed states and their nuclear allies behaved at the NPT Review Conference illustrated how deep the divide is between them and the rest of the world on questions of nuclear weapons. These were discussions between states of course, but they were also discussions between human beings.

The sheer hypocrisy and unpleasantness of their statements and interventions over the four weeks makes one wonder whether the people representing these governments’ positions actually experience the social awkwardness that would normally accompany such behaviour. One hopes so.

If they don’t and unless they are deeply cynical, the only alternative is that these individuals believe they are representing positions that constitute a force for good in the world and feel a sense of consternation that the vast majority of the other people in the room reject their possession of nuclear weapons.

One purpose of the ban treaty process will be to confront that sense of consternation. The coming diplomatic process will further expose the global injustice of nuclear weapons. In this way it will provide space for individuals to challenge the positions they are told to accept about the value of nuclear weapons. This applies to government officials as much as it does to parliamentarians, journalists and others involved in shaping our collective understandings of nuclear weapons.

There was also a sense of desperation in some of the work of the nuclear-armed states and their nuclear allies, though. This perhaps reflects a waning of the influence of nuclear weapons as instruments of global power. As much as the states that wield them cling

onto them, nuclear weapons are being challenged as never before. They make no sense. They will have to be prohibited and eliminated at some point and everybody has agreed that, whether cynically or genuinely.

Some will argue that the influence of these weapons is greater than ever, with nuclear-armed leaders and alliances brandishing them in the context of their geopolitical rivalries. Yet these same leaders are happy to set these rivalries aside when it comes to rejecting the challenges to their legitimacy from the rest of the world. They will work together to keep their veto power in the UN Security council just as they will work together to keep their nuclear weapons from being challenged.

The nuclear-armed states looked weak at the NPT though. Their failing global stewardship was painfully exposed. Their taunting of the rest of the world on nuclear disarmament has succeeded only in galvanising states and civil society in their work towards a diplomatic process to ban the last remaining category of weapons of mass destruction remaining outside an international prohibition treaty.

The old and the new imperial powers will not help lead the world towards disarmament. The NPT has shown once again that this will have to be the responsibility of states with a clearer understanding of how to ensure the future of humanity. On either side, the individuals tasked with articulating the positions of their states have an opportunity to reject cynicism, to face reality and to channel the social awkwardness of carrying out their hypocritical instructions into a determination for change. •



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