



News In Review



A collection of N G O views on the NPT PrepCom 2003

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Or, So We Have Heard

Today's morning session on Cluster 2 (Regional) Issues, attained such a level of un-productivity that it closed way ahead of schedule. Or, so we heard. NGOs are, after all, relegated to roaming the halls in search of friendly delegates who can give us a glimpse into the proceedings.

The four issues that were discussed were: 1) the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and its withdrawal from the treaty; 2) a Middle East zone free from weapons of mass destruction; 3) a Central Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ); and 4) the South Asia proliferation dilemma.

Given the seriousness of at least three of these issues — including the potential for war and even nuclear war — one would expect a dynamic debate on how to address nuclear dangers in the regions. However, the statements were reportedly rather mute with many States simply regurgitating lines from their opening statements delivered last week.

Diplomatic sanguinity was possibly enabled by a positive spin from the recent talks on the DPRK situation held in Beijing, the publishing of the long-awaited roadmap to peace in the Middle East, the near conclusion of the Central Asia NWFZ, and the recent relative calm between India and Pakistan.

The NGOs, however, eventually got our hands on the working papers that have been submitted by a variety of States Parties, demonstrating that there is indeed some constructive activity occurring behind the closed doors. The 13 working papers submitted thus far cover a wide range of topics, including reporting (Canada), verification (UK), reducing the danger of nuclear war (China), strengthening the review process (South Africa), Negative Security Assurances (the New Agenda), and non-strategic (tactical) nuclear weapons reductions (Austria, Mexico and Sweden).

The UK's paper on verification measures was based on recent studies conducted by the Ministry of Defence on the Chevaline, WE177 and Trident systems (the first two of which have been decommissioned). The study is based on the welcome assumption that there will be "future arrangements seeking to reduce and ultimately eliminate stockpiles of nuclear weapons," and that capabilities to verify these arrangements will be necessary. The study has focused so far on warhead authentication, i.e. "establishing that an item declared to be a nuclear warhead or component from a warhead is consistent with those declarations." It indicates that such authentication is technically possible. Further work will cover the more difficult tasks of verifying warhead dismantlement, fissile material and its disposition, and the ongoing monitoring of nuclear complexes. When the UK announced the study in 2000, Australia suggested that other States could use their experience to assist in the development of verification capabilities. So far the UK does not seem to have responded to this suggestion but is continuing in its study on a unilateral basis.

Building on its long-standing belief in the necessity of standard reporting to the NPT, the Canadian paper reminds us that reporting was a promise of the 2000 Rev Con, as "the step that focuses most directly on what States Parties themselves can do in the implementation of the Treaty and the obligations and commitments that each has accepted. Regular reporting is a means of promoting transparency and confidence building, which "can spur action" to further the goals of nuclear disarmament.

The South African paper suggests that NPT States Parties can take their cue from the recent Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference "to undertake the substantive consideration of what can be done to achieve further progress in the future to strengthen the implementation of the Treaty." They propose that

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Who's Who - NGO profile

Seiichiro Takemine

Peace Depot

1. What are your hopes or expectations for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation 2003 Preparatory Committee?

I am honored to be able to attend the 2003 PrepCom meeting. I think the meeting is significant how we create a direction toward a nuclear free world based on the 13 steps. More individually, it is the first time for me to attend an internal meeting like this. Therefore, I hope to meet and share with participants directly.

2. What topics do you work on most or find the most interesting in this forum?

I am interested in grasping the current discussions among both governments and NGOs on nuclear issues. I am documenting the experiences and the opinions from those exposed to the consequences of nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands; I listen to the voices from Hiroshima and Nagasaki survivors. When you and I discuss nuclear issues, I hope to convey the experiences of these victims of nuclear development.

3. What led you to be doing the work that you are doing now?

As a volunteer staff at Peace Depot, I continue to keep a diary mainly about WMD on our newsletters. As a graduate school student, I continue to research about the Marshall Islands, which had experienced 67 nuclear detonations by the United States. You may think it is a past event, but it continues to affect the local area. The Marshall Islands government submitted a petition calling for additional compensation to US Congress in 2000. Those of us who work for nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation must tackle the problem of how we can recover a peaceful life to the victims of nuclear testing. What can we do to create and maintain peace in that area? We must never forget the fact that nuclear weapons testing occurred in the Marshall Islands while under a UN trust territory.

A Message from the Axis of Hope

After a long, hectic and exhausting week of activities at the NPT PrepCom, three NGO delegates took a day off on Sunday for a brief tour of the French Alps. We spent a glorious day enjoying the old Europe. We explored the market in the French village of Annecy, hiked up the hill to the old castle, and discovered the *Mysteres et deouvertes*, a most surprising art exhibition, bringing together medieval and futuristic art installations reflecting in one way or another the alpine landscape. The three of us found it spellbinding.

Emerging into the blazing sunlight, we pondered the spectacular view of the snow-capped mountains towering above Lake Annecy and watched the leisurely picture below of sailing boats and strolling families. One of us observed, imagine that the whole world could be this peaceful and content. As we sat together on an ancient stone wall and posed for a photograph, we looked at each other and realized who we were. One of us was from Germany, where nuclear fission was discovered and ballistic missiles originated. One of us was from the United States, the first country to develop and use nuclear weapons. And one of us was from Japan, the first country to suffer the devastating effects of the atom bomb. All of us were born in the years following these events. And all of us were women. We felt that we were the axis of hope.

We sat down together to write postcards to our friends at home. And this is the message we sent:

We have a dream...A nuclear weapons convention ratified, space weapons banned, missiles gone, and we have loads of time to enjoy beautiful Switzerland (and France)! Love and peace from
The Axis of Hope.

-Satomi Oba, Japan (born 1950)

-Jackie Cabasso, USA (born 1952)

- Regina Hagen, Germany (born 1957)

The End of Arms Control?

Arms control is as old as war itself. Fear that the mix of technology and warfare would unleash destruction of unacceptable proportions has led states to cooperate many times to limit war. Although arms control efforts have enjoyed mixed results, they have served as invaluable tools at critical times in world history. However, despite the successes of the past, many officials inside the Bush Administration and Congress have lost faith in arms control as a central tenet of U.S. security strategy.

A recent report by the Republican House Policy Committee has declared an "End to Arms Control". The report reads, "[W]ith respect to other security challenges posed by weapons of mass destruction there are little opportunities to strengthen arms control regimes in the areas of most concern. The states that are seeking to develop these weapons are largely uninterested in limiting their programs through negotiations or in honoring the agreements they make." ("Differentiation and Defense: An Agenda for the Nuclear Weapons Program," February 2003, p.13)

The Bush Administration shares this perspective. Through various speeches and strategy documents, the Administration has abandoned arms control as a means to advance U.S. security. Instead of controlling armaments through dialogue and cooperation, the goal of the new policies is to scare potential enemies out of even thinking about obtaining nuclear weapons. With this new strategy, the Administration has lowered the threshold for using nuclear weapons and is encouraging, rather than dissuading, others from pursuing nuclear weapons.

Although their method of handling proliferation threats is extremely dangerous and destabilizing, the Bush Administration is right about one thing. Changes in the international security environment call for new strategies for handling threats. During the Cold War, arms control was the most important method of preventing global annihilation. Maintaining the balance of power between the U.S. and the Soviet Union through arms control was a way of preventing imbalances that might tempt one side to start a nuclear war. The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty goes further, making sure that the balance of power is not jeopardized by additional states obtaining nuclear weapons.

When the Cold War ended, a new security environment emerged with no similar balance. The events of September 11 made that imbalance clear. Potential nuclear threats now come in the form of non-state actors, such as Al-Qaeda, and states attempting to deter regional adversaries or U.S. aggression.

The arms control community must take these changes seriously. The answer is not simply to expand our old solutions to the new security environment. New problems call for new solutions. To confront these new realities with the vigor they deserve, arms control must not be seen as outdated, but as a tool to adapt to new realities.

The traditional approach to proliferation has focused on "supply-side" measures, focusing on limiting the supply of weapons and related technologies through various control mechanisms. Such efforts include treaties, supplier controls limiting the export of sensitive material, and cooperative threat

reduction initiatives. These efforts are important and must continue, but these approaches alone will likely fail. As long as millions who feel threatened by U.S. or regional military power, there will be states and people with nuclear aspirations. Supply-side measures are likely to fall short of their goals regardless of how many treaties and verification measures enacted due to the simple fact that nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented.

It is time to engage new approaches to handle nuclear threats. A "demand-side" nonproliferation effort would reduce the desire for new weapons systems through political persuasion. The goal would be to show states and non-state actors with nuclear aspirations that such weapons will not lead to security. This is where arms control can play a role. The uncontested military power of the U.S., and its willingness to make nuclear threats has caused insecurity and fear in much of the world. The fact that the U.S. continues to see nuclear weapons as central to its security reinforces the idea that these weapons can be sources of power. As long as powerful countries continue to rely on nuclear weapons, these horrific weapons will remain attractive commodities.

To move forward, the Bush Administration should focus on the demand of nuclear proliferation, not only the supply. Without a focus on reducing fear of U.S. aggression through practicing self-restraint, the demand for nuclear weapons will not decrease. Under a weapons demand control regime, the U.S. would:

- 1) Implement its nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) commitments. Article VI of the NPT includes a commitment from all member states to "pursue negotiations in good faith to end the nuclear arms race and to achieve nuclear disarmament under international control." The U.S. has not lived up to its obligation of pursuing disarmament. As long as some states are permitted to have nuclear weapons, others will want them as well.
- 2) Stop efforts to resume nuclear testing and to build new nuclear weapons.
- 3) Declare a "no first use" policy.
- 4) Give legally binding negative security assurances. These are pledges by the nuclear states not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states.

U.S. nuclear policy is obviously not the only factor causing proliferation, however, addressing this issue is crucial for curbing proliferation. These concrete steps would enable the U.S. to again be a leader in disarmament. If the U.S. assumes a leadership role in arms control, much of the world will likely follow. When a large proportion of the world views the U.S. as the main threat to peace in the world, the U.S. cannot effectively lead. For America to have any hope in winning the "war on terrorism", or in deterring totalitarian regimes with nuclear aspirations, a strategy of capturing hearts and minds must be used to neutralize the feelings of fear and hate that prevail in the world. Arms control is only part of such a security strategy, but it is essential. Instead of reducing commitments to arms control, the U.S. must approach the issue with new vigor.

Scott Stedjan

Friends Committee on National Legislation (Quakers)

Quote of the Day

There is
indelible
responsibility in
the possession
of nuclear
weapons. They
are all our
business. -

Working Paper
submitted by
Canada, April
24, 2003

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the NPT agree upon five items "to discuss and promote common understanding and effective action" that would be reached by consensus.

Those of us who loathe Article IV "carrot" to so-called "peaceful" uses of nuclear technology, can look towards the New Agenda Coalition, who offer another incentive to all States to join and remain within the NPT: Negative Security Assurances (NSAs). "Security Assurances rightfully belong to those who have given up the nuclear weapon option as opposed to those who are still keeping their options open." The paper also discusses key questions to be addressed in the negotiation of NSAs, including the nature, scope, format, and essential elements of any agreement. The NAC even offers a draft protocol agreement as an annex.

China submitted working papers on several issues, including "reducing dangers of nuclear war," "preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons," NWFZs, nuclear energy, and "the Middle East nuclear issue." Although many NGOs welcome the positive features of China's nuclear policy, such as its separation of warheads from missiles, no-first use policy, and NSAs, it uses these papers to reaffirm "national sovereignty" and "territorial integrity" as cornerstones of its nuclear policy. Such narrow concepts of "national security," which nuclear weapons are supposedly meant to defend, run contrary to the principle that human security and global security must prevail if we wish to truly eliminate the threat of nuclear war.

It was reported that Sweden had posed specific questions to the Nuclear Weapons States (NWS), in which they asked them to compare their individual national security strategies to those of the Non Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS), and to see how they differed. Instead of continuing to criticize the NWS for their archaic approach of seeking security through the threat of mass annihilation, Sweden is wisely inviting the NWS to from the NNWS how national security through international law and cooperation works.

Or, so we have heard.

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