



News In Review

A collection of NGO views on the NPT Review 2000

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The Equivocal Meaning of Unequivocal

Lets turn once again to the dictionary. Unequivocal means not ambiguous, plain, unmistakable. What the New Agenda Coalition states have called for in their Working Document on Nuclear Disarmament is a new, unmistakable, unambiguous and plain commitment to the total elimination of nuclear arsenals held by the five Nuclear Weapon States. "The five nuclear-weapon States make an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and, in the course of the forthcoming Review period 2000-2005, to engage in an accelerated process of negotiations and to take steps leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States Parties are committed under Article VI."

Just a few days ago a leaked document dated January 2000 (has anything changed since then?) revealed a fairly shameless equivocation of the "unequivocal" nature of the US and Russian commitment to the Article VI goal of nuclear disarmament (see page four for quotable quotes). Yes numbers have come down, but as doggedly noted yesterday, only a half hearted celebration is possible when nuclear policies remain intact and when the killing power of smaller arsenals is guaranteed by ongoing modernization of weapons systems. In this one example, the "Talking Points on the ABM Treaty", we see why, at this time of policy recommitment to nuclear militarism, a new unequivocal declaration for the total elimination of nuclear weapons is necessary. Implicit in this call is

a belief that a reversal of the current dangerous policy direction is possible and necessary, and that current policy by the nuclear weapon states is in direct violation of the NPT.

The five nuclear weapon states released a statement yesterday in which the word unequivocal appears twice, "We remain unequivocally committed to fulfilling all of our obligations under the Treaty", and "We reiterate our unequivocal commitment to the *ultimate* goals of a complete elimination of nuclear weapons and a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control." (emphasis added) Ultimate means: last or last possible, final. This explains why many states and all NGOs are fairly suspicious of the word ultimate.

Reception Tonight

Join WILPF and the Reaching Critical Will team at our reception tonight

- refreshments provided

- photographic exhibition on display

Event begins at 6pm and ends when disarmament or exhaustion hit - whichever is first

2nd Floor - the Church Centre -
777 UN Plaza

all NPT delegations & NGO members welcome

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The real highlight of the P5 text is paragraph 22, into which NGOs are ploughing a great deal of hope towards the final text of the Review Conference. "We are determined to take a forward-looking approach to nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. The NPT provides an indispensable framework for future efforts against nuclear proliferation and towards nuclear disarmament. We fully acknowledge our particular responsibility and key role in ensuring continued progress in the implementation of the NPT." While it is promising that the P5 could produce this text in spite of the tensions between them, there is nothing new in terms of concrete commitments in the statement issued yesterday. It is basically business as usual, same terms of debate, same litany of vague commitments.

The highlight of yesterday was the Truth Commission featuring a Hiroshima Survivor, an Australian Aboriginal Activist, a former chemist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, an elder of the Chumash Nation, a retired Commander of the Royal Navy (UK), an activist from the Pacific Islands and a Three Mile Island Downwinder.

Setsuko Thurlow was a thirteen-year-old student when the Hiroshima bomb hit. She escaped but almost all of her classmates were burned alive. She noted the way in which the US occupation enforced silence on the survivors. Diaries, notes, specimens were confiscated. When she started speaking out against testing, she received unsigned hate letters.

Jacqui Katona spoke of the uranium prospectors that came to Mirrar land in the Northern Territory of Australia twenty-five years ago. She also spoke of the community's sense of responsibility in preventing any harm to others from the uranium mined on their land near Kakadu National Park. She said, "We face a multinational mining company more powerful than government that makes unilateral decisions on behalf of people without even a parody of democracy."

Andreas Toupadakis appealed to every technician, secretary, scientist, custodian to withhold their skills from weapons work. Toupadakis resigned in protest when he learned that his work would be used for weapons purposes, despite his initial belief that he would be doing environmental work.

Pilulaw Khus described the nuclear facilities on her land, the Diablo nuclear power plant and the Vandenberg Airforce base, both on sacred ancestral land. Representing the Bear Clan, Pilulaw Khus spoke of her concern about the proposed NMD because the Vandenberg Airforce base is considered good for launching missiles into space.

Rob Green spoke of his gradual transition out of the elite nuclear crew in which the team got a buzz, felt special, but did not discuss the weapons they were handling. He spoke of his Aunt, Hilda Murrell who was murdered in 1984 for her work opposing nuclear power. Her murder has never been explained but has recently resurfaced in the British press.

Richard Salvador spoke of his home Belau which wrote a constitution that would make it nuclear free and deny the US military use. 92% of the people approved this constitution. Salvador documented the US role in forcing repeat referenda and elections to shape a constitution that served their purposes. The process included unexplained assassinations.

Mary Osborn stated that if the whole truth about Three Mile Island were revealed, it would force the closure of the nuclear industry. From the metallic taste in her mouth on the day of the disaster to the deformed plant life that she documented in slides, Mary Osborn testified to the cancers, the allergies, the heart and thyroid disorders in the community around Edison, Pennsylvania.

Each of the speakers shed light on the real human costs of the nuclear age to this generation and to those of the future. Biologically speaking, future humans are already present within the sperm and ova of men and women alive today. In this spirit, a panel of Listeners heard the testimony from the perspective of future generations and reported from "the not too distant future", 2100, 2250 and 12,000. News from the future revealed that nuclear weapons had been eradicated and that this change was made possible by the strength and courage of voices such as those heard in the Truth Commission yesterday.

Felicity Hill
Director of the UN Office
WILPF

Xanthe Hall

**IPPNW Germany
Political Coordination**

1. What are your hopes or expectations for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review 2000 Conference?

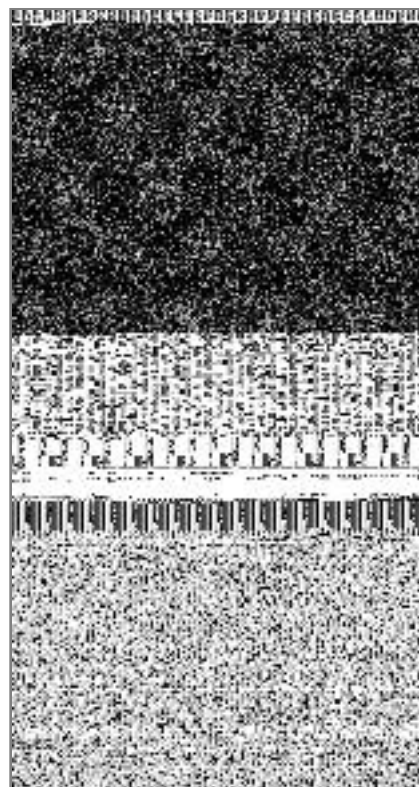
I hope there is a final document and that they agree on reinforcing the Principles and Objectives and get a firmer commitment from the USA to Article VI. But I expect that there will be no agreement and that there will be a high level of frustration.

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

Mostly nuclear disarmament, but also NATO strategy, European security policy, conflict resolution and prevention, arms trade and general anti-war work.

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

Fear of nuclear war in the early eighties, when Britain was known as "Airstrip One". When I was 19 years old I went to an exhibition of photos from Hiroshima and immediately joined the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Now the work is in my bones.



Quote of the Day

“Emphasising the essential importance of cooperation, demonstrating and advancing mutual trust among ourselves, and promoting greater international security and stability, we declare that none of our nuclear weapons are targeted at any State”

P5 Statement
May 1, 2000

Who's Who - Diplomat Profile

Henrik Salander

**Ambassador for Disarmament - Sweden
Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament**

1. What are your hopes or expectations for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Review 2000 Conference?

A sturdy outcome. And reversing somewhat the negative trend of the last few years.

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

Working in all settings that Sweden participates in: the European Union, the New Agenda Coalition and the G-10. As well as working in the group dynamics in these channels. All the topics that come up in these venues are enjoyable.

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

Before being diplomat, I worked as a full-time musician and then as a journalist. I started later than some in the foreign service, with disarmament forming a large part of the work that I have done to-date. First I was the head of the disarmament division in Stockholm, then the Deputy in New York for some years, before taking the position in Geneva that I fill today.

ABM TALKING POINTS

This article lists some of the U.S. "Talking Points" on amendments to the ABM Treaty which contradict the Article VI requirement to negotiate in good faith for nuclear disarmament. It is reproduced from The Bulletin of Atomic Scientist.

NMD Protocol: Topics for Discussion

"... The US NMD system would not be directed against Russia and would not weaken Russia's strategic deterrent potential.

... We are ready to work with Russia to achieve confidence in the capabilities of a limited NMD system to counter extremist rogue states and to develop revisions to the ABM Treaty."

Russia's Concerns

"... The US national missile defense system, which will be limited and intended to defend against several dozen long-range missiles launched by rogue states, will be incapable of threatening Russia's strategic deterrent at the level of START-II or START-III (or later).

For more than 30 years the classic argument in favor of strategic stability and against the deployment of a large-scale strategic missile defense system has been based on concerns that one side might have the ability to make a surprise disarming first strike against the enemy and then deploy a broad strategic missile defense system to knock out the enemy's combat resources which had survived the first strike and were being launched against the assailant. We have clearly stated that the US missile defense system to be developed by the US Government is a very limited strategic missile defense system intended to protect against a threat from some rogue state, which may, at most, use a few dozen warheads accompanied by advance defense penetration aids."

First Strike Scenarios

"Both the United States of America and the Russian Federation now possess and, as before, will possess under the terms of any possible future arms reduction agreements, large, diversified, viable arsenals of strategic offensive weapons consisting of various types of ICBMs, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers. Specifically, Russia's proposal for START-III would make it possible to have 1,500 – 2,000 warheads and even according to highly conservative hypotheses, Russia and the United States could deploy more 1,000 ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads over the next decade and thereafter.

These strategic offensive forces give each side the certain ability to carry out an annihilating counterattack on the other side regardless of the conditions under which the war began.

Forces of this size can easily penetrate a limited NMD system of the type that the United States is now developing. ..."

Limiting the Scale and Capabilities of the Proposed US National Missile Defense System

"... The first phase of deployment will be limited to 100 interceptor missiles. Ultimately, when a second deployment position is added, there will be 200 or so interceptor missiles. This will be enough to knock out several dozen warheads accompanied by advanced defense penetration aids, by inadequate to counter a larger Russian counterstrike.

... In any case, in view of the openness of budgetary processes in the US, this hypothetical increase in the number of interceptor missiles would be known several years before the expanded forces would first be deployed."

Penetrating the US NMD System

"... The limited NMD system that the USA is developing relies on hit-to-kill technology, in which the interceptor missile destroys the warhead on impact with it. ..."

Response to Russian Proposal on Development of a Global Monitoring System and Expansion of Cooperation in Other Areas to Track Missile and Missile Technology Proliferation

"... You should not mistakenly interpret the limited national missile defense system that we are developing as evidence that we have given up trying to prevent the proliferation of missile technologies or are unable to counter it. Despite all our efforts, however, we cannot expect that steps to prevent or counter it will be successful in all cases. ..."

Global Monitoring System

"... We are especially concerned about offering aid within the framework of national space programs. It is difficult to 'aid' space efforts, especially a space launch, without promoting the proliferation of missile technologies. These technologies overlap much more than do technologies for the development of nuclear reactors for peaceful civilian use and those for a nuclear weapons development program.

While we are not ready to provide aide to national programs for the development of booster rockets, other space-related incentives might be considered, such as providing rocket-launching services at favorable prices for key countries. This might be an appropriate topic for discussion at a Big Eight meeting. ..."

Unilateral Statement

"... If the threat will grow, as we think it will, we will exercise our right, in accordance with the Protocol, to request further negotiations to draft further amendments to the Treaty to protect against more serious and sophisticated threats from North Korea and the Near East. ..."

ABM Treaty "Talking Point" Documents
January 20, 2000

The UK's unilateral reductions have tended to be withdrawals of ageing nuclear warheads such as the WE-177 free-fall bomb from the stockpile. In the mid-1990s the UK did decide not to proceed with procurement of a nuclear armed tactical air-to-surface missiles, so this weapon system was effectively disarmed before getting off the drawing board, but the UK's main contribution to disarmament has been through qualitative rather than quantitative measures.

Since the election of the Labour government in 1997, the UK has taken a number of welcome initiatives in the disarmament field. These include:

- reductions in warhead numbers
- reductions in the number of Trident missiles purchased
- increased transparency concerning fissile material stocks
- strong support for the CTBT
- strong support for the Additional Protocol.

British Government officials do, however, frequently make a number of statistical claims concerning the UK record on nuclear disarmament, many of which require further scrutiny. For example, in his speech to the 1999 NPT PrepCom, British Ambassador Ian Soutar made the following assertions:

Quotes from the UK at 1999 NPT PrepCom with Comments

"The WE-177, the UK's free-fall nuclear bomb, has now been entirely withdrawn from service."

The WE-177s, which were first introduced in the 1966 and 1971 with an estimated shelf life of 25 years, were rendered obsolete by the end of the Cold War and were already scheduled for retirement.

"Only one Trident submarine will be on patrol at any time: carrying a reduced load of 48 warheads, half the previously announced ceiling of 96 warheads."

According to Parliamentary Questions, Trident submarines have never deployed with the previous ceiling of 96 warheads. A typical deployment was previously 60 warheads, indicating that the UK has only reduced numbers by 20%, not 50%.

"The submarine on patrol will be at a reduced state of alert, at several days 'notice to fire'..."

"Its missiles are detargeted."

The UK's initiative falls short of measures commonly known as "dealerting". In fact the UK opposes dealerting measures such as removing warheads from missiles on the grounds that "there would be significant difficulties in detaching our warheads from missiles while maintaining the credible deterrent to which Her Majesty's Government are committed..." Despite the UK's detargeting policy, it is possible "quickly to restore operational targets to the missiles should the need arise".

"HMG has decided that we will maintain fewer than 200 operationally available nuclear warheads, a reduction of one-third from the previously announced ceiling of 300."

The UK has never had more than 200 operationally available Trident warheads in its stockpile. The Government has confirmed that "no warheads have been decommissioned" as a result of this announcement.

"The explosive power of our operationally available weapons will have been reduced by over 70% since the end of the Cold War."

Replacing larger, slower, and less flexible WE-177 and Polaris weapons with the leaner, meaner Trident system does not constitute nuclear disarmament.

"The explosive power of each Trident submarine will be one third less than that of our Polaris submarines in recent years."

Polaris Chevaline is believed to have been deployed with 32 x 200 kiloton warheads per submarine. Trident deploys with 48 x 100 kiloton warheads. So although explosive power has been reduced, warhead numbers may have actually increased.

Vox Populis

glimpses from the Truth Commission

“ I must say I feel outraged at the small group of nuclear weapon decision makers who keep us, the people of the world, hostage to live in fear of possible nuclear holocaust...[This] mindset reflects no humanity, no morality, but self interest, power and domination.”

Setsuko Thurlow
Hiroshima Survivor

“We have fought uranium mining since non-Aboriginal people brought it to our lands along with colonisation and we fight to protect our land and our people, not because it is our political choice, but because it is a matter of survival.”

Jacqui Katona
spokesperson for the Mirrar People

“I concluded that in view of the current policy of the lab and, in general, the nation, the future would bring an increase of violence. I told him that I had resigned for that very reason. If national labs build more powerful weapons every day then the only thing they bring to smaller nations of the world is fear and fear brings violence and I do not want to be a part of it.”

Andreas Toupadakis,
former chemist at LLNL

“...and we failed in the courts, and we failed in the political scene, and we failed in the streets, so we gathered together at our centre and we said ‘now is the time’ and...we went out there and we established an occupation. It lasted for close to a year, and I was there throughout that time, and in that arena we won. They did not build that plant.”

Pilulaw Khus
Elder of the Chumash Nation

“At that moment I realised that my leaders were militarily incompetent. That is a terrible thing to discover.”

Rob Green
Ret. Commander in the UK Navy

What's On

2 May 2000

event:

“Russian Nuclear Weapons Laboratories” Panel by IPPNW

place & time:

Conference Room C @ 10 - 1pm

event:

Panel on South Asian nuclearization featuring journalists and authors from India

place & time:

Conference Room C @ 1.30 - 4.30pm

event:

WILPF & Reaching Critical Will reception:

“NPT - Nuclear Party Time!”

place & time:

**2nd Floor, Church Centre,
777 UN Plaza, New York @
6pm - either exhaustion or
disarmament hit!**

Plenary Meeting:

Sessions begin @ 10am
General Assembly

Main Committee 1:

Sessions begin @ 3pm
Conference Room 4

Main Committee 2:

Sessions begin in the afternoon
after the General Debate
in the General Assembly

Main Committee 3:

Sessions begin @ 10am
Conference Room 4

Please check times and venues