



# The First Committee Monitor

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October 13-17, 2003: Week Two

## NGO Reporting on the General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security

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Since 2000, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) based in New York have been working together to share monitoring and reporting responsibilities in an attempt to make the work of the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security more transparent and useful for those not based in New York.

These services include:

- \* Posting statements, draft resolutions, and First Committee background information on line at:  
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/1com/1comindex1.html#2003>,
- \* Preparing weekly reports summarizing statements and discussions in the First Committee and tracking key themes,
- \* Providing information as requested to individuals by email or phone, and
- \* Distributing to the First Committee the materials of NGOs who are not in New York.

*The First Committee Monitor* is edited and coordinated by Reaching Critical Will, a disarmament project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Editors, WILPF, or RCW.

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**The contributing groups to The First Committee Monitor include: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; The Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy; The NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security; Global Action to Prevent War; Amnesty International; The Global Resource Action Center on the Environment; Franciscans International; and Quakers International.**

## Introduction

At the crux of the First Committee Bureau's decision to shorten the general debate and make time for informal sessions on "revitalizing the First Committee," was the unanimous desire to maintain consensus and to promote unity amongst the Member States. After weeks of general statements, both in the GA and in the Committees, frequent reference to "revitalization," or "repoliticization" evidenced a needed discussion. One way of jumpstarting this discussion with minimal objection from Member States, was to close the doors, speak frankly, and shut out the NGOs who have been dutifully monitoring and reporting on the events for years.

While we congratulate the Committee for the ability to recognize one method of fostering unity, we are nonetheless dismayed at our exclusion. We hope, however, that this sense of purpose and drive toward consensus does not diminish as the debate ensues, and that Member States can use this process as a learning tool for further successful, consensus-based decisions on disarmament, peace and security.

In the same vein, NGOs from various backgrounds and with different areas of expertise have come together in the working group that produces this newsletter. Each week, these varied groups- ranging from faith-based organizations, a legal group, a humanitarian relief group, a coalition of disarmament groups, and an international women's peace group- convene in the cramped quarters at 777 UN Plaza, to debate and discuss the best ways of monitoring, reporting, and promoting action at the First Committee. We hope that the work we produce not only enhances the work of other NGOs, governments, and UN staffers, but also serves as a model of cooperation and the utility of civil society efforts.

In this week's issue, Reaching Critical Will again takes up the pertinent topic of First Committee reform, despite the fact that NGOs did not have access to the much anticipated informal discussions. Nya Gregor-Fleron of the Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy reports on the efforts of Member States to promote a culture of peace, through disarmament education, Regional Centers for Peace, Disarmament and Development, and the Human Security Network. The report on Proliferation this week focuses on the Proliferation Security Initiative,

a new effort to curb the proliferation of WMD and related matériel that is sure to be a heavily debated issue in the coming months. In her report on Disarmament Machinery, Jennifer Nordstrom of Global Action to Prevent War, describes the recent discussion concerning the Special Sessions on Disarmament, and the desire of many States to see a Fourth Special Session.

As was conveyed in the briefing by the Vice-Chair on Thursday, October 16, the efficacy of NGOs runs on a two-way street. The unique quality of our work depends largely upon like-minded States and their openness toward our participation, just as their efforts are enhanced and promoted with the incorporation of NGO research, advice, and assistance. Disarmament remains the number one priority for both civil society groups as well as for the vast majority of Member States. We strongly encourage the ideas, comments, questions, and concerns of States that they might have while reading *The Monitor* or other NGO materials. To facilitate a dialogue on any of the issues raised in this publication, we have included in this edition the email addresses and websites of all participating NGOs.

We look forward to hearing from you.

-Rhianna Tyson,  
Reaching Critical Will  
The Women's International League  
for Peace and Freedom





## Missiles

As Regina Hagen, Coordinator of the International Network of Engineers and Scientists Against Proliferation noted at the NPT PrepCom this spring, "Ballistic missiles pose a threat even when they are not equipped with nuclear warheads. From extremely small range missiles in the conflict area around Israel - over precision missiles used in the Afghanistan war - to the recent use of cruise and ballistic missiles in the war against Iraq - missiles pose a threat regardless of the nature of their warheads, be they conventional, biological, chemical, or nuclear." Yet despite this threat, the current disarmament regime remains relatively weak in the field of missiles.

At present, there are just a few measures undertaken by States to prevent the proliferation of missiles. At the First Committee, most of the States that have acknowledged this problem have done so in the context of The Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (the HCOC), the Missile Technology Control Regime, and/or the Wassenaar Arrangement.

As noted in last week's Monitor report on missiles, even the most vocal advocates for missile non-proliferation measures, although they may "welcome the adoption" of the HCOC, still note that it remains insufficient, and should be appropriately regarded as "a significant step forward," as Bangladesh and Morocco acknowledged. Armenia, following along these lines, welcomed the adoption of the HCOC, an initiative to which they referred as "one of the important initiatives...toward further regulation of outstanding disarmament issues."

The stated purpose of the HCOC is "to prevent and curb proliferation of Ballistic Missiles systems capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction," and has 109 subscribing states. Members are also urged "to exercise maximum possible restraint in the development, testing and deployment of Ballistic Missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, including, where possible, to reduce national holdings of such missiles." The Code is not legally binding, rather members agree to oblige to transparency measures of their national ballistic missile policies and space launch programs, including the announcement of launches in advance and providing annual reports on the amount and type of ballistic missiles launched each year.

## Nuclear Weapons Free Zones

Cameroon, Bahrain, Thailand, Morocco, ASEAN, Mali, Nepal, Sudan, Cuba, Croatia, The Lao PDR, and Iran all spoke in favor of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones this week.

Nepal congratulated the countries of Central Asia that their region will soon become a NWFZ, "adding laurel to regional arms control efforts." The Nepalese delegate commended Mongolia for its "novel proposal to institutionalize its status as a single state Nuclear Free Zone" and welcomed the proposals of Egypt and other nations for the establishment of zones free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

Bahrain expressed its particular desire for a "zone free of weapons of mass destruction" in the Middle East and criticized Israel for its possession of nuclear weapons. Similarly, Iran chided Israel for its continued development of weapons of mass destruction.

Thailand called upon states to support the establishment of a NWFZ in South East Asia.

Vietnam welcomed and supported "all efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free-zones in various regions of the world as the establishment of NWFZS is a practical means towards a world of peace."

The Lao People's Democratic Republic stated that they have been pro-active in ASEAN efforts towards the effectiveness of the Bangkok Treaty establishing the South East Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ). "Yet," said the Lao PDR, "the said endeavors have remained unsatisfactory for the Protocol annexed to the Treaty is subject to accession by Nuclear Weapons States."

Cuba paid reference to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America (The Tlateloco Treaty), saying that "Cuba's ratification on the Tlateloco Treaty has enabled this international instrument to be comprehensibly implemented."

OPANAL will be convening a General Conference in November, in Havana, Cuba. For more information on the Conference, see: <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/nwzf/tlatel.htm>

-Wyatt Matthews  
Franciscans International  
In this week's references to radiological or fissile

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### *Missiles Continued*

In the same vein as the statement from South Africa last week, Nepal asserted that "a multilateral regime to control missiles has become urgent," without suggesting that the HCOC is the regime they have in mind. Likewise, the ASEAN Member States felt that, "the concerns related to missile proliferation are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements." They also referred to the Expert Study, but did not invoke the HCOC.

Croatia discussed, at relative length, its recent steps in the field of missile proliferation. Croatia is party to the HCOC, described by Ambassador Drobnjak as a "multilateral initiative, with potential for wide adherence, (which) will provide the international community with additional means for increasing global security, as well as isolate dissenters." Ambassador Drobnjak also expressed his country's desire "to take part as a member" in the MTCR as well as the Wassenaar Arrangement.

Cyprus briefly suggested formalizing the relationship between the HCOC and the United Nations, possibly as part of the effort to strengthen the Code and promote its universalization.

Iran, the sponsor of the 2000 resolution that created the Expert Panel on Missiles, noted that "certain developments in recent years has caused concern at the international level." Ambassador Fadaifard also highlighted the report of the UN Panel of Expert on Missiles, and its positive response from the General Assembly and the XIII Conference of Heads of States of Non-Aligned Movement. Iran will again table the resolution on missiles, substantively unchanged from the one adopted last year, with the "confiden(ce) that it will enjoy the broadest support of the Committee" again in 2003.

For more on missiles, see:  
<http://abolition2000.org/groups/missileban/docs/mbmd.pdf>, a comprehensive report on the current state of international missile control, including an outline "framework agreement to restrict the development, testing, and deployment of all ballistic missiles and missile defense."

-Rhianna Tyson  
Reaching Critical Will

### **Fissile Materials**

materials, Georgia strayed from the usual references to a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) when it broached the issue in the context of inadequate storage and accountability of such materials. Ambassador Kaha Chitaia specified Georgia's concern with "the Institute of Physics and Technology in Sokhumi, Abkhazia, which falls under the actual control of Russia's authorities...where the conditions for the storage of radioactive materials, according to the IAEA assessment, are deplorable." He also cited the "197 unaccounted sources of radiation [that] have been found in Georgia, left behind by the Russian Army." He urged "all states to assist Georgia, and other states in (a) similar situation, in addressing this problem."

India joined the chorus of support for an FMCT, adding that it "remains committed to join international efforts to prevent weaponization of outer space." New Zealand coupled its support for an FMCT with the statement that it is "only one component of the broader programme required to achieve the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons, but an important one nonetheless." Other states, such as Bangladesh, Croatia, Eritrea, and Myanmar, expressed concern over the stalemated CD and the consequent failure to begin FMCT negotiations (see Disarmament Machinery report, page 7).

New Zealand also noted with satisfaction the "outcomes of the International Conference on Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material, which recommended establishing a dialogue between governments, and setting up a working group on liability." As the current chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, New Zealand is "only too well aware of the impact that a shipping accident, even without release of radioactivity, would have on the fragile tourism and fishing industries of our region."

-Rhianna Tyson  
Reaching Critical Will



## Proliferation

Amidst the numerous discussions of proliferation, some States have referenced, directly or indirectly, the newest counter-proliferation measure, introduced by the United States in May of this year: the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).

The eleven countries that are currently members of this elite group, including Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the United Kingdom, have endowed themselves with the authority to interdict vessels in air, on land, or at sea, that are suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction or their related matériel.

Naval exercises under the PSI began in September, although as of yet no ship, plane, train or other vessel has been stopped under the auspices of the initiative. It is rumored that some participating states, namely the European members, are dubious as to the PSI's validity so long as it remains outside of the UN framework. Therefore, it is not surprising that the United States proudly referenced the PSI in its statement to the GA on October 23, as a beginning step to garner multilateral political support, and opening up the possibility of UN-sponsorship.

Other participating States also raised the issue in their general statements to the First Committee. Ambassador Inoguchi of Japan stated that, "Japan considers the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) as being consistent with Japan's efforts to hinder the spread of WMD and their delivery systems."

Most political and disarmament analysts agree that the Proliferation Security Initiative was conceived in response to the United States' inability to seize unidentified North Korean missiles bound for Yemen last year, when Spain, acting on U.S. intelligence, stopped a flagless ship and released it, even after finding 15 scud missiles and 15 conventional warheads hidden under 40,000 sacks of cement. The Initiative, cooked up by U.S. Under-Secretary of State John Bolton, does not explicitly focus on the DPRK, but most are agreed that they are the obvious target. It is therefore interesting to note that Ambassador Inoguchi continued, "Japan will call upon countries, particularly those in Asia, to participate in, and cooperate with, the PSI to work towards effectively preventing the proliferation of WMD with a view to strengthen coordination and cooperation within the international community."

Australia, another participating state, also stated its support for the Initiative, which it regards as "com-

plement (to) existing non-proliferation regimes and...entirely consistent with international laws. Australia strongly encourages the many states committed to preventing the spread of WMD to lend their support to this important initiative."

Non-participating states, such as Iceland and Norway, also voiced their support for the PSI. Norway's reference came directly after a reference to non-proliferation efforts of the "UN (and) the Security Council", perhaps in an effort to couch the Initiative in such international validity. Iceland, calling for "effective measures (that) are urgently needed in place where they matter," viewed the PSI "as a practical approach to counter the growing challenge posed by proliferation of weapons of mass destruction."

Other States were not quite as supportive of the new U.S.-led project.

Cuba warned that, "The dangerous trend to adopt decisions on disarmament and arms control, outside the United Nations, in unclear negotiating processes and the attempts that this Assembly further on endorses what was established in such exercises, results unacceptable." Cuba maintained that the Security Council, Disarmament Commission, and Conference on Disarmament remain "the only universal deliberating and negotiating bodies, respectively, for these issues."

Iran, too, questioned the authority and legitimacy of the ad hoc group, contrived by the largest weapons producers themselves. "It is not surprising," said Ambassador Fadaifard, "that those Nuclear Weapon States that have continuously worked to ensure that their ability to transit nuclear weapons is not hindered by regional nuclear weapons free zones, are currently advocating selected interdiction of such suspected materials or any other materials even with civilian applications to and from certain states under the pretext of preventing proliferation. These countries themselves transfer the largest amounts of missiles and weapons to other states, even to the non-parties to non-proliferation and disarmament treaties every year. The reports of which are well documented in the UN Register System."

In the context of Iran's statement, it is important to note that the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), perhaps the PSI's strongest

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### *Proliferation continued*

obstacle on the road to legality, explicitly permits the transfer of nuclear weapons through territorial waters and narrow straits. There is no reference in UNCLOS to the transportation of missiles or WMD components.

That the PSI will be operating under the "suspicion" of cargo containing WMD and its matériel is also a key aspect which begs certain questions, as raised by the Bipartisan Security Group, a program of the Global Security Institute: "How is the decision to interdict made?...How else is a state to be determined to be 'of concern' and thus have its ships subject to interdiction?...Is 'of concern' a legal classification? What is there to stop any state from saying it is concerned with another state and exercising the same right of interdicting ships and planes?" In light of these important questions, Nepal reminded the Committee this week that, "Preemptive measures based on perceived national security threats have exposed humankind to one more war." Will the Proliferation Security Initiative spawn more distrust among States, thereby securing more proliferation? Or, worse yet, will the PSI precipitate yet another war?

For more on the Proliferation Security Initiative, see:

[http://www.gsinitiate.org/programs/bsg\\_policy-brief.shtml](http://www.gsinitiate.org/programs/bsg_policy-brief.shtml) and

<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/action/Advisories.html#July251>

For the PSI's Statement of Interdiction Principles, see:

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/globalissues/psi/index.html>

For the text of UNCLOS, see:

<http://www.un.org/law/ilc/texts/hseafra.htm>

-Rhianna Tyson  
Reaching Critical Will

### **Verification and Transparency**

New Zealand trenchantly raised core issues regarding verification, stating: "The international debate within the UN Security Council on weapons of mass destruction highlighted the importance of full and effective verification. Verification by an objective and independent body is crucial to building mutual trust and confidence between States." Indeed, the failure of the United States to find nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons in Iraq, or even evidence of recent "programs," would seem to indicate that international inspections can work. Other countries highlighting the importance of verification mechanisms were Libya, the ASEAN countries, and Georgia. Bangladesh listed as a priority: "Place maximum emphasis on strengthening the enforcement, monitoring and verification regimes in respect of all international treaties relating to disarmament and non-proliferation of WMDs".

Many other countries touched upon the importance of transparency in arms control and disarmament, including Lebanon, Libya, ASEAN, Cuba, Israel, Armenia, Dominican Republic, Georgia, Senegal, Guatemala, Chile, Mozambique, Serbia and Montenegro, the Philippines, Croatia. New Zealand emphasized that states should cooperate with the IAEA to create transparency and build confidence.

Croatia reported that it is the host of the Regional Arms Control Verification and Implementation Assistance (RACVIAC). Established by Croatia and Germany, the project assists "in the process of creating greater transparency, openness and predictability in the area of military security, cooperation and dialogue between participating states." Among other things, it organizes workshops on implementation of regional arms control agreements including verification.

- Nya Fleron and John Burroughs,  
Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy



## Disarmament Machinery

Many States referenced the first Special Session on Disarmament, held 25 years ago, and the progress, or lack thereof, on disarmament since then. Bangladesh expressed its regret that there has been no general and complete disarmament, and its wish to reaffirm the principles of SSODI. Pakistan went further to say that the principles of SSODI had been "perverted, if not subverted," reminding States that the concept of "equal security" was supposed to flow from "sovereign equality" and was to be implemented through general and complete disarmament in both conventional and non-conventional spheres.

Most States expressed continuing regret and frustration over the impasse in the CD, DC, and on the lack of agreement on an SSODIV. Colombia was one of many, including the Philippines, Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nepal, Thailand, Myanmar on behalf of ASEAN, Lesotho, Cuba and Iran, to call for an SSO-DIV, saying "we insist on the urgency of reaching agreement on the objectives and agenda of the IV Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament." Iran stated that after "the continued blockade in the Conference on Disarmament, last year the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), and the Working Group on fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSODIV) both failed to reach conclusions due to the persistence of the unilateralists."

Several countries addressed the foundations of the impasse in the CD after the US claimed last week that it was due to the attempt to link other issues (PAROS, nuclear disarmament, security assurances) to negotiations on an FMCT. Malawi commented generally regarding the CD the impasse "that unless the nuclear powers show sufficient flexibility and practical commitment to nuclear disarmament, we will always be confronted with this serious challenge, and at times, open disagreements that do not contribute to, nor promote international peace and security."

Croatia stated that it supports the A5 proposal for CD work and that it "cannot agree with calls for linking or conditioning the start of negotiations on priority items such as on a Fissile Materials Cut-Off Treaty with other items ..." (See "Fissile Materials"

## Nuclear Testing

"The warning signs are there for all to see. What is the price for failure? Are we prepared to pay the price?" asked Ambassador Vladimir Drobnjak of Croatia, in reference to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty's (CTBT) unduly prolonged entry-into-force (EIF).

If the warning signs are indeed plain for all to see, as the ambassador from Croatia declared, then it is perhaps disturbing that few States went beyond paying peripheral attention to the CTBT, noting simply their support for a CTB, and their concern at the treaty's prolonged EIF, without offering hints of further recommendations.

Thailand stated that it "welcomes the recent ratification of the CTBT by Algeria and other states" and "is committed to the development of the CTBT verification regime". Equally proactive, Croatia noted that "it is essential" that states supporting the CTBT concentrate their efforts "more vehemently on achieving the Treaty's early entry-into-force". Cameroon refers to the CTBT as a "pillar" (pilier) of international non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. With a similar view to that of Thailand, Cameroon is committed to the development of the CTBT verification system.

While Morocco expressed regret that the CTBT has not yet come into force even after much energy and vigour was put into its negotiation, Nepal affirmed that "it is a matter of disquiet that the CTBT...is still grounded". Its Ambassador, M. R. Sharma, further noted that the "urgency" of negotiating the CTBT and the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) is heightened by "the fact that terrorists are seeking weapons of mass destruction". (See "Fissile Materials" report, page 4) Moreover, the Lao PDR referred to the CTBT as "regrettably remaining ineffective", Guinea alluded to the "advantage of being party" to the CTBT, and the Dominican Republic called for the "global and universal adherence" to the treaty.

Haiti, Tunisia and Kuwait also emphasized the importance of the cessation of nuclear testing.

Finally, Myanmar, speaking on behalf of itself as well as on behalf of ASEAN, supported the "early entry-

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## *Disarmament Machinery Continued*

report, page 4) Croatia also expressed its disappointment that 22 countries, including itself, remain on a waiting list to be admitted to the CD because "several member CD member states" refuse to open the CD to newcomers. Myanmar on behalf of ASEAN noted that the Philippines and Thailand also await admittance. In one of the few positive comments on disarmament machinery, New Zealand said "there is some hope that the Conference [on Disarmament] may be able to agree on a comprehensive programme of work."

Many States expressed support for the IAEA and its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol. Colombia and New Zealand asked Iran to "clarify its peaceful intentions" with its nuclear program by working with the IAEA, and Saudi Arabia and Yemen called to for Israel to submit to IAEA standards. Iran replied, "Our nuclear program is solely for peaceful purposes and, therefore we have principally no problem with the transparency, including the implementation of the provisions of the Additional Protocol. In this direction, we worked and continue to cooperate with the IAEA to remove all doubts about the peaceful nature of our nuclear program at the earliest time possible. Hopefully, all outstanding issues would be solved if and when the politically motivated propaganda allows that."

For more on the Conference on Disarmament, see:  
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/cd/cdin-dex.html>

-Jennifer Nordstrom  
Global Action to Prevent War

## *Nuclear Testing Continued*

into-force" of the CTBT. Ambassador U Mya Than expressed that Myanmar is "encouraged by the increasing number of ratifications of the CTBT by the signatory states".

Kyrgyzstan ratified on October 2, just prior to the start of the First Committee. At present, 106 countries have ratified the CTBT, including 32 of the 44 "Annex II" states.

Let us hope that the discussions of a CTBT during the next weeks of the Committee produce more substantive discussion on promoting this critical treaty's entry-into-force.

We recommend starting with Rebecca Johnson of the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy's compelling look at options for the CTBT's EIF at:  
<http://www.acronym.org.uk/dd/dd73/73ctbt.htm>.

For more information on the CTBT, see:  
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/legal/ctbt/ctbtindex.html>.

- Julika Erfurt and Rhianna Tyson  
Reaching Critical Will



Global Action to Prevent War, in collaboration with the NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security, presents a panel this week on

### **"Comprehensive Peacekeeping: Updated Program of Global Action to Prevent War"**

Panelists:

**Saul Mendlovitz**, Dag Hammarskjold Professor of International Law, Rutgers University, and Chair, International Steering Committee, Global Action to Prevent War

**Jonathan Dean**, former State Department disarmament negotiator, now international security advisor for the Union of Concerned Scientists

**Randy Rydell**, UN Department for Disarmament Affairs

**Felicity Hill**, UNIFEM

**Jonathan Schell**, disarmament expert and author, most recently of *The Unconquerable World: Power, Nonviolence, and the Will of the People*.

**Monday, October 20, 1:15-2:45pm, in Conference Room 5**



## First Committee Reform

"Evidently, 'reform' is the prevailing word of the current session," said Ambassador Vladimir Drobnyak of Croatia, remarking on the salient and popular topic of First Committee Reform, an issue that continued to take prominence throughout the second week of the Committee's general debate. In addition to various statements and the emergence of three different non-papers on the topic, the Committee Bureau decided to reschedule the order of the general statements in order to hold informal- and closed to civil society- consultations on the First Committee reform.

### (i) General Support of and Specific Suggestions for Reform

About half of the countries supported the initiative to rethink the working methods of the Committee. Whereas the debate last week concentrated on whether or not a reform should only take place in the context of a general GA reform (see last week's "First Committee Reform" report), the focus of this week's statements was the support for the proposed reform and the informal consultations that took place Thursday and Friday.

Singapore asserted that "it is time ... to ensure that it [the Committee] can rise up to challenge and make a real contribution towards international peace and security". New Zealand, Viet Nam, Nepal, and Georgia supported the need to "reform and revitalize" the First Committee, and Israel noted that it is necessary to "reassess its [the Committee's] approach" in the handling of security issues. Saudi Arabia and Libya equally support the streamlining of the Committee's working methods. Contrary to last week, only Cuba mentioned that the First Committee reform should go hand in hand with a general reform of the General Assembly.

Several countries explicitly supported the Chairman's suggestion to hold informal consultations. Columbia spoke favorably of the presented initiative "to rationalize the work of the First Committee" and noted that it is "ready to participate in the informal consultations". Thailand welcomed the initiative of the Chairman and sees the "interactive dialogue" as something in "all our inter-

ests". Morocco finally affirmed that they want to participate in the consultations in a "constructive manner" (de façon constructive) and "in the spirit of dialogue" (dans un esprit de dialogue).

Finally, several specific substantive and procedural ideas for the nature of a Committee reform were brought forward. Guinea proposed a regulation for discussing resolutions biannually or triennially in order to prioritize the most pressing issues. Croatia, on the other hand, focused on time management and suggested the "shortening of speeches and distributing the longer version of national statements", and proceeded to comply with its own suggestion.

### (ii) Non-Papers

Three non-papers were submitted during the two weeks of the general debate. All three are based on the understanding that the work of the First Committee could be "streamlined" and "modernized" to result in more effective working methods.

Norway's suggestions in "Enhancing the Role of the First Committee of the General Assembly" (Oct 9) include the preparation of each session's topics in advance, the shortening of time for the general debate, and the reduction of resolutions and decisions. The European Union's non-paper on the "Rationalization of the Work of the First Committee" (Oct 10) further stresses an increase in the "interactivity of discussions in general debate as well as the thematic discussions".

The most detailed and recent non-paper was brought forward by the US on "Proposals for Enhancing the Contribution of the First Committee to the Maintenance of International Peace and Security" (Oct 13). While many of the issues addressed in the US non-paper correspond to those of Norway and the EU, the US additionally suggests to "retain the existing mix of resolutions/agenda items, but apply them only to one geographic region each year".

### (iii) NGO Briefing

NGOs, who have historically enjoyed unwavering

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## **Biological Weapons**

Again, biological weapons have been brought up by many of the delegates, but there have been no mentioning of a resolution on the matter, and no discussions regarding UNMOVIC.

The countries that directly mentioned the need for a verification protocol for the BWC, were the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Georgia, Croatia and Bangladesh. The Bangladesh delegation also stated "It appears disarmament has gone out of fashion". Let's hope not.

Croatia said we're "deeply disappointed with the breakdown of negotiations during the Fifth Review Conference of the" BWC.

On the other hand, Myanmar, speaking on behalf of the ASEAN (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and Myanmar itself) noted "the progress that has been made in the negotiation of the Protocol on the verification of the" BWC. We are not sure how to interpret this statement since - as far as we know - there has not been any progress since 2001. But one can see this as support from ASEAN to such a verification protocol.

New Zealand, Libya, Vietnam, Sudan, Eritrea, India, Cameroon and Lesotho all mentioned the need to strengthen the BWC in general.

Just as they did last year, Cuba came out strongly against the US accusations that Cuba is doing research and development of biological weapons, stating that Cuba is not "the one opposing the strengthening of" the BWC." Cuba insisted there was truth to the accusations.

As Norway mentioned last week, the risk of bio-terrorism is real. This week Bahrain, Georgia, India and Israel brought up this issue. And the danger of biological weapons in general were mentioned by many of the delegations, e.g. Colombia and Tunisia.

-Arild S. Frick,  
NGO Committee on Disarmament

## *First Committee Reform Continued*

access to the First Committee, were shut out of the meetings on Thursday and Friday, a decision by the Bureau that most NGOs regard as a dangerous precedent. In response to the phone calls and emails from NGOs, the Vice-Chair (Thailand) held a two-hour briefing session for civil society on Thursday morning (Oct 16).

At the briefing session, the Vice-Chairman informed the NGOs that the President of the GA had consulted with the Chairs and Bureaus of all the Committees on the matter of GA reform. In this context, the Vice-Chair explained that all delegations agreed to the consultations, despite a wide range of views regarding the nature of a reform among the delegations. He noted further that the reform should be based on consensus, rather than vote, to ensure the support of all delegations and subsequently the successful implementation of the reform.

Regarding structural issues, the Chairman asserted that the basic nature of general debate should remain the same, however that the debate could possibly be shortened and thematic discussions should be more interactive. Other States have already voiced support for this idea, including Canada, which also held a short briefing with NGOs the following day.

Rebecca Johnson of the Acronym Institute suggested that the UN Disarmament Commission, (UNDC) which meets once a year for two weeks in New York, should be overhauled and that discussion should instead take place in the NPT, which meets only a few weeks after the UNDC does. This would transform the disarmament debate into a more time effective process.

"Clustering" and/or "tiering" resolutions as a way of decreasing time spent on same issues was also suggested, as a way to maintain the sense of urgency for an issue and also facilitate easier analysis of resolutions.

The Vice-Chair noted that the idea of clustering resolutions has been met with resistance by several delegations. There has been positive feedback on

*continued on page 11*



The representatives from Non-Governmental Organizations who are contributing to The First Committee Monitor include:

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*First Committee Reform Continued*

the "biannualizing" or "triannualizing" the resolutions (tabling a resolution every two or three years). Moreover, the lack of implementation and the proliferation of similar resolutions is seen as a more pressing issue by several delegations.

Owing to the Vice-Chair's openness and ease with which he facilitated the discussion, NGOs frankly discussed their concern about being excluded from monitoring the informal consultations of the First Committee on Thursday and Friday and urged that interactivity in the Committee should not be equated with closing out NGOs. "Interactivity" has indeed become a popular buzzword within diplomatic circles since the NPT PrepCom this spring, (see <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/legal/npt/NIR2003/NIRday9.pdf>, for Reaching Critical Will's view of "interactivity" at the PrepCom) and should interaction between Member States become institutionalized, to shut out NGOs at this formative stage would set a dangerous precedent. The Vice-Chair noted these concerns, and assured the NGOs that their perspectives would be discussed in the closed session.

The Vice-Chair suggested two ways to strengthen the cooperation between NGOs and governments. First, to distribute a NGO position paper 2-3 weeks before the First Committee session and, second, to offer a briefing session to the delegations 1-2 days before the beginning of the session.

His suggestions are duly noted, and we thank him once again for his briefing.

- Julika Erfurt and Rhianna Tyson  
Reaching Critical Will

Archived First Committee  
Monitors can be found at:  
[www.reachingcriticalwill.org/  
political/1com/1com03/fcm  
index.html](http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/1com/1com03/fcmindex.html)

## Nuclear Disarmament

On behalf of the ASEAN countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), Myanmar announced that they will again sponsor a resolution calling for an immediate halt to development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and delivery systems, dealerting and deactivating measures to reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems, and the convening of an international conference on nuclear disarmament. The ASEAN countries will also join in co-sponsoring Malaysia's resolution reaffirming the unanimous ruling of the International Court of Justice [ICJ] that there exists an obligation to bring to a conclusion negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Myanmar stated that the "ASEAN countries share the view that the [ICJ opinion] is a very important contribution to the international community's efforts for peace and security."

During the first week, the proposed international conference also received support from the Rio Group (Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela). Speaking on behalf of the group, Peru stated that "[w]e commit to the proposal contained in the Millennium Declaration to request an International Conference to determine appropriate ways to eliminate the nuclear dangers ...." Peru also stated that although "we regret the small progress done in order to obtain the complete application of the Thirteen Measures on Nuclear Disarmament" agreed by the 2000 NPT conference, "we are convinced it is essential to strengthen and revitalize" the NPT. Peru also noted that the "Rio Group manifests its preoccupation for the unexpected development of new nuclear weapons and doctrines of security that intend their possible use."

Some of the second week's most telling comments on the policies of the NPT nuclear weapon states came from Pakistan and Iran. Pakistan stated: "Nuclear disarmament is given lip service at the NPT review conferences. But in practice, the Nuclear Weapon States display no intention of giving up their nuclear weapons – now or at any time in the

## Culture of Peace and Human Security

### UN Disarmament Study

The UN Study on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education, a two-year study, was released last year by a group of governmental experts and adopted as a resolution sponsored by Mexico (A/C.1/57/L.7/Rev.2). The study consists mostly of recommendations for governments, UN bodies, academic institutions and civil society. It was prompted by growing concerns of the lack of progress in the field of disarmament, and the belief that education on all levels can help improve the understanding of the close relationship between disarmament and international peace and security.

New Zealand, a great supporter of the study, has implemented the recommendations in its educational system. In its statement to the First Committee, New Zealand commented that the study "provide[s] a timely reminder of the vital importance of peace education" and added furthermore that "[o]ne of our best hopes for a peaceful future is to encourage young people to develop non-confrontational ways of dealing with conflict, starting in their immediate surroundings and extending out to the wider community. By incorporating peace education programmes into all levels of society, we can reflect our joint goal of working towards a more secure and stable future. States parties, international organizations and civil society must work together to make this aspiration a reality."

### Regional Centers for Peace, Disarmament and Development

UN Regional Centers for Peace, Disarmament and Development are a practical initiative to promote peace and security, disarmament and arms control, advocacy and resource mobilization, and information, research and publication, notably in the domain of small arms and light weapons, on a regional and subregional levels. The centers are instruments for promoting transparency, database arms registers, peace education, weapons collections, and destruction and conversion for development programs, through training and workshops. Regional Centers are located in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia and the Pacific. A

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*Disarmament Continued*

foreseeable future. Thousands of nuclear weapons are retained and new war-fighting nuclear weapons are being developed." Iran said that the United States' ("One Nuclear Weapons State") "[c]onvening of a two-day secret conference on the development of new nuclear weapons in Nebraska in the very week of the anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima was shocking. Without a doubt, this runs contrary to the claim of the same State that its policies help to curb weapons of mass destruction.... [The Moscow Treaty] is notably weaker than the previous treaties, namely START II and START III [both never entered into force], and certainly it cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and total elimination of, nuclear weapons." While other states not condemned for their own nuclearization (Pakistan) or scrutinized regarding compliance with IAEA safeguards (Iran), may feel it less politic to say such things, surely many of them, along with many NGOs, would grant their present truth.

For details regarding the August 2003 STRATCOM meeting in Omaha, Nebraska as well as NGO opposition, see <http://wsfweb.org/nukes/stratcom.htm>

For bullet points on current U.S. policies, see <http://www.lcnp.org/disarmament/talkingpointsuf-pj.htm>

- Carlos Gonzales and John Burroughs,  
Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy

*Culture of Peace Continued*

number of countries in their general statements this week referred to the importance of these centers, including Myanmar, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Togo, Nepal, Congo and the ASEAN States.

Myanmar stated on the topic of Regional Centers situated in Asia and the Pacific that "countries in the region have benefited a lot from the regional seminars, workshops and other activities on disarmament issues, organized by the Center." Cameroon stressed the importance of the Centers in Central Africa, referring to training programs that are being held in the region. Nepal emphasized that "[t]he role of regional centers for peace and disarmament is crucial to speed up the pace and process of disarmament and arms control at the regional level." Nepal added that it is "committed to relocate without delay the regional center for peace and disarmament for Asia and the Pacific to Kathmandu". Bangladesh supported this initiative in its statement, noting that it "are an ardent promoter of a culture of peace and non-violence...".

*Human Security Network*

In its statement to the First Committee, Mali referred to its involvement in the Human Security Network, launched in Norway in 1999 by Austria, Canada, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand (South Africa as observer). The network, which consults with NGOs and UN agencies, works to identify concrete areas for collective action and ways to energize political processes aimed at preventing or solving conflicts and promoting peace and development. Mali mentioned that the current priorities of the network include "peace education, children in armed conflict, the battle against small arms, and gender issues in peace operations". Other objectives include the universalization of the Ottawa Convention on Anti-personnel Landmines, the establishment of the International Criminal Court, the fight against transnational organized crime, human rights education, and conflict prevention. For more see [www.humansecuritynetwork.org](http://www.humansecuritynetwork.org)

- Nya Fleron,  
Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy

## Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space

China, one of the strongest advocates for a treaty on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS), successfully orbited its first human around the planet this week. Although some hawks regarded the mission as evidence of China's attempts to progress its own weaponization of space, such as the Heritage Foundation (see: <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/wm346.cfm?renderforprint=1>), others, such as Secretary-General Kofi Annan, called it a "step forward for all humankind." As a symbol of its commitment to a peaceful outer space, two United Nations flags accompanied the astronaut in his journey.

Despite this event, references to outer space were few and far between this week at the First Committee. Most States that broached the issue decontextualized it from the stalemated Conference on Disarmament, which, if it is to agree on the proposed agenda of the five ambassadors from Belgium, Algeria, Chile, Colombia and Sweden (commonly referred to as the A5 Initiative), will form an ad hoc body "with a view to negotiate" a treaty on the issue.

Both India and Nepal conveyed their support to prevent an arms race in outer space without referring the issue to the Geneva Conference. India hinted that the militarization of outer space is already underway, and that they "remain committed...(to) control its further militarization."

Cuba stressed the importance of preventing an arms race in outer space by linking it to underdevelopment and poverty. Ambassador Rodney López Clemente asked the Committee, "What is the aim of the efforts made to militarize outer space? How much could be accomplished if only a part of that colossal amount of money were invested for the search of solutions to poverty, underdevelopment, insalubrity, and the gap reduction among the richest and the poorest countries?"

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which attributed the present international instability to the failed promise of disarmament by the Nuclear Weapons States, underscored the threat to a peaceful outer space. "Global disarmament efforts are

## Conventional Weapons

Many countries advocated for greater attention and focus for conventional weapons issues, much like last week's statements. Colombia stated, "SALW are real mass destruction weapons" reflecting similar concerns brought up by Norway and Namibia last week, and Eritrea reminded us that "conventional weapons have been the major instruments of destruction during the past few decades, particularly in the third world." Yemen's statement reported that the most pressing problem in their country involved SALW. The detrimental effect of SALW on development and their devastating effects were touched upon by African States. Overall, there was a call to address the problem of conventional weapons and SALW in all its aspects in an effective manner, and an expression of support for progresses that have occurred.

Many countries voiced support for the First Biennial meeting and the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (the PoA) and the consensus to take concrete and urgent measures for the implementation of this PoA. Saudi Arabia called the First Biennial "the first serious step." Many statements voiced support for the PoA, such as those by China, Japan, India, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, Colombia, Malawi, Guinea, Georgia, Congo and others, and many outlined their State's participation towards ending the illicit small arms trade. Israel agreed to support the PoA "wherever there is danger that [SALW] will reach the hands of terrorists and their supporters." Nepal stressed that, despite the consensus surrounding the PoA to combat illicit trade a genuine global partnership was still lacking. Bangladesh reported that the meeting afforded them the opportunity to explore areas of international and regional cooperation, as well as possible partnership with civil society to effectively implement the PoA at national levels. The statement from Congo also mentioned civil societies' significant role in eradicating the illicit trade in SALW.

In 2001, a Group of Governmental Experts on Tracing Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons was established by the General Assembly. It concludes, in its July report to the Secretary General, that the development of an international instrument to

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*PAROS Continued*

faced with serious challenges," Ambassador Yon stated. Not separate from the existence of a single "nuclear superpower," is the threat of that State's efforts to "expand the nuclear arms race" into outer space.

Some States do not support pushing a PAROS treaty further in the CD, although they do not bother to include a reference of "non-support" in their general statement. Croatia, however, expressed just that. Croatia believes that "the climate...is still not ripe" for PAROS discussions, and that "The CD should start work on those areas where agreement already exists and work towards gaining consensus on those issues."

The Lao People's Democratic Republic voiced veiled support for China and Russia's efforts in the CD: "We appreciate the relentless efforts pursued by some major NWS towards the conclusion of a new outer space arms control agreement." There was a hint of rare optimism in their statement as well, a rarity among the diplomatic crowd. "We believe this could happen," said Ambassador Kittikhoun hopefully, "should statesmen demonstrate their real political will and spirit of cooperation in pushing the existing multilateral process of disarmament forward."

The women of Reaching Critical Will fully concur with Ambassador Kittikhoun.

For more information on PAROS see:  
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/legal/paros/parosindex.html>

For more information on PAROS in the CD see "The Reaching Critical Will Guide to the Conference on Disarmament" at:  
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/cd/cdbook.pdf>

For a summary of CD Member States' views on PAROS see:  
<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/cd/alerts.html#Topic>.

-Rhianna Tyson  
Reaching Critical Will

*Conventional Weapons Continued*

enable States to identify and trace illicit SALW is feasible. It recommends that the Assembly take the decision at the current session on the negotiation of this tool. Uganda's statement welcomed the report, and India's statement said "we hope that no effort will be spared in maintaining the consensus generated by the substantive consensus reflected in the work of this group."

Saudi Arabia, Columbia, Guinea, Georgia, and Congo voiced support for marking and tracing. Mali expressed hope for a legally binding international instrument and a mechanism that would allow for systematic follow-ups on the marking and tracing of SALW. Congo mentioned the work carried out by France and Switzerland to develop an international tracing mechanism for SALW.

Columbia, Japan and South Africa tabled a draft resolution on "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects."

Other aspects of SALW issues were mentioned by States. The statement from Yemen called for a greater focus on the root causes of the use of SALW, such as economic, social, religious, and ethnic causes. Lebanon discussed the effect of SALW to fuel wars and conflicts because of their easy use and ready access. Georgia mentioned the link of SALW with terrorism, stating: "Closer ties between the separatists and terrorists are increasingly being forged" where SALW, APL are being stocked up, and sited a illegal operation at the Russian military base as tied to the proliferation of SALW in Georgia.

*Landmines:*

Successes in landmine reduction were celebrated, and the ongoing challenges were highlighted. Landmines as a genuine humanitarian problem was highlighted in the statement from Lebanon, which reported that landmines "claimed 15,000 victims, mostly civilians, each year" and outlined their detrimental effects on development. Libya reported that 10 million mines buried in Libyan soil during the WWII need to be removed, and called on the countries that had implanted those mines (Great Britain and Germany) to follow Italy's lead and provide Libya with maps and technical and financial assistance for mine removal. Sudan, Cyprus, Armenia, Guinea, and Malawi outlined their support of the Ottawa Convention and their measures to eradicate

## Negative Security Assurances

While not a member of the NPT, India has offered an assurance of non-use of nuclear weapons against countries not possessing nuclear weapons. However, this year India qualified that assurance. On October 15, the Indian representative told the First Committee that India has "a firm commitment to avoidance of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states - except in the event of major WMD attack." (emphasis added) The statement reflects doctrine announced on January 4, 2003 by the Indian Cabinet Committee on Security. That announcement was made less than a month after a U.S. National Strategy declared that the United States "reserves the right to respond with overwhelming force - including through use of all of our options - to the use of WMD." Thus the erosion of negative security assurances proliferates, based largely on the false assumption of equivalence among nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. Nuclear arms are orders of magnitude more destructive and lethal than chemical arms and, at least in most cases, than biological arms.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) broached the subject of security assurances in a general way, stating: "[T]he nuclear superpower has realized its nuclear monopoly and misused the NPT to blackmail non-nuclear weapon states with nuclear weapons.... [T]he fundamental task in achieving nuclear disarmament is the real abandonment by

the nuclear superpower of its policy on nuclear threat." During the Cold War, the United States had a declared option of use of nuclear weapons to respond to a non-nuclear North Korean attack. In the post-Cold War years, while the United States has withdrawn nuclear forces from South Korea, and promised in the 1994 agreement to eventually issue security guarantees to the DPRK, the option of U.S. use of nuclear weapons against the DPRK has remained on the table. Thus among the possible "immediate contingencies" for U.S. nuclear use identified by the 2002 Nuclear Posture Review is a "North Korean attack on South Korea".

On behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam), Myanmar, like the New Agenda ministers, emphasized the need for NPT Preparatory Committee meetings to allocate time for deliberation on security assurances. Laos said "due and urgent consideration must be given to the earliest commencement of the negotiation and conclusion of a universal unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances ...." Mali made a similar appeal.

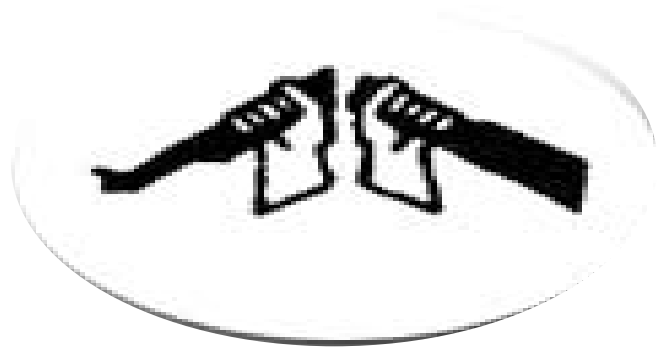
- John Burroughs,  
Lawyers' Committee on Nuclear Policy

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## *Conventional Weapons Continued*

land mines, with Guinea asking for greater assistance. Yemen voiced their support for landmine eradication.

-Eliza Kretzmann, Quaker United Nations Office  
Jennifer Nordstrom, Global Action to Prevent War  
Sarah Sullivan, Amnesty International





## **Chemical Weapons**

In accordance with the statements made last week, a majority of delegates tipped their hats in support for the OPCW and the CWC.

Iran said that the "OPCW...can be viewed as the only successful international disarmament regime." They pointed out that "being the last victim of weapons of mass destruction at the end of the 20th century, gives the Republic of Iran a unique position" on the topic of biological and chemical weapons.

India said that the results of the first Review Conference of the CWC are reassuring in terms of undertaking by all of its parties to meet their respective obligations.

Georgia and Colombia both made passing remarks that the CWC must be implemented and enforced.

Malawi stated that they had established a National authority in July 2003 that has drawn up a plan of activities that it intends to carry out within the next 12 months in regards to the CWC.

Myanmar welcomed "the positive outcome of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention."

"We hope," said the delegate from Myanmar, "that the 8th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention, to be held later this year, will be able to develop a plan of action on national implementation measures and to take further concrete steps in the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention"

In accordance with what seemed to be the general sentiment, New Zealand had a positive outlook on the CWC as well: "The First Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention held in April and May of this year demonstrated that the Chemical Weapons Convention is beginning to get into its stride. The Review Conference reinforced New Zealand's conviction that the Chemical Weapons Convention makes a vital and essential contribution to international peace and security..." New Zealand warned however that follow-up on the Convention is key:

"We must not think the job is done once a convention enters into force."

Thailand, who ratified the Chemical Weapons Convention at the end of last year, is preparing with the OPCW to co-host the Regional Workshop on Assistance and Protection in Bangkok in March 2004. Thailand also hosted the Regional Workshop on the Universality of the CWC in March of this year.

-Wyatt Matthews  
Franciscans International

Be sure to check out  
*The First Committee Monitor*  
in HTML on the web!  
The HTML format provides:

- \*instant hyperlinks to the statements referenced in the reports;
- \* hyperlinks and email access to directly correspond with the authors;
- \* easy-to-use "jump" features, to flip to the topics you care most about;

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