

# FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

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## FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

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

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Cover image by Daniel Gherca (Romania), winner of the Nuclear Crystal Ball Contest held by the World Federation of United Nations Associations in 2011.

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Reaching Critical Will is the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the oldest women's peace organization in the world. Reaching Critical Will works for nuclear and conventional disarmament, the reduction of global military spending, and the demilitarization of politics and economics in order to achieve human security and social, economic, and environmental justice.

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Reaching Critical Will

# EDITORIAL: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

During the thematic debate on nuclear weapons, Ambassador Kennedy of the United States criticized the increasing demands for “wholesale approaches to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.” She complained, “Disarmament is hard work. There are no shortcuts and no practical alternatives to the step-by-step approach. Trying to accomplish everything at once will distract us from more realistic efforts.”

However, the step-by-step approach, originally developed in the 1960s, has failed to achieve results. Fifteen years ago, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) had been adopted, a mandate for negotiating a fissile material treaty had been reached, and 13 practical steps for disarmament had been agreed by all nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) states parties. There may have been momentum for the step-by-step approach at that time. Now, however, this path seems have reached a dead end. The CTBT has not entered into force, the fissile materials treaty has not been negotiated, and the 13 practical steps have largely been ignored or even abdicated in some cases.

While the 2010 NPT Review Conference endorsed a new action plan for moving forward, the nuclear weapon states have so far failed to make tangible progress implementing their disarmament commitments. As Jim Kelly of Ireland argued last week, the original NPT bargain was made between the “will disarms” and the “will foregos”. As he noted, “The ‘will foregos’ have kept their side of the bargain, and we believe that progress in-kind from the ‘will disarms’ is overdue.”

There is a growing realization by non-nuclear weapon states that, if left on their own, the nuclear weapon possessors will not comply with their legal obligations to eliminate their nuclear weapons. Furthermore, if these states are left on their own, it is not clear that any instruments that they develop will have concrete effects. The New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, as Hans Kristensen of the Federation of American Scientists has pointed out, “reduces the *legal limit* for deployed strategic warheads,” but “it doesn’t actually reduce the *number* of warheads.” Earlier this month, he remarked that based on the aggregate data released by the US State Department, “it is not clear that either country has made any explicit warhead reductions yet under the treaty.”

Thus the majority of non-nuclear weapon states have recognized that they will have to take the lead on ensuring nuclear disarmament actually occurs. The status quo, in which the tyranny of the minority can threaten the security and survival of the vast majority, will no longer be accepted. The 21st century is characterized by an unprecedented level of interconnectivity and international solidarity. People throughout the Middle East are reaching out to each other in mutual respect

to assure each other that they do not war in the region. Citizens from the United States have marched in Pakistan to show that they oppose their government’s use of drones. The idea that a handful of governments can continue to possess weapons of terror and say they are for purposes of “security” seems outrageous to most people—and most other governments.

During her remarks last week, Ms. Nyhamar of Norway agreed, “There is no doubt that nuclear disarmament is not easy and requires hard work.” However, she argued, “That is why we cannot allow the current impasse in the machinery to prevail. And just as nuclear weapons concern us all, so the responsibility to work for a world without nuclear weapons rests with all UN Member States.”

UN member states are indeed taking the initiative for nuclear disarmament. Austria, Mexico, and Norway have tabled a resolution to create an open-ended working on nuclear disarmament. The Non-Aligned Movement is proposing a high-level meeting on this subject during the next General Assembly. This week, more than 30 governments will deliver a joint statement on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

And governments are not alone in seizing responsibility for action. Over the weekend, dozens of humanitarian and disarmament civil society organizations came together in New York to strategize for how to move forward on creating a more equitable, just, and peaceful world for all. Our work, whether on establishing international standards for the arms trade, eliminating entire weapon systems, or developing norms and laws for international behaviour, will be the path forward. •

## International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

*with the support of*

**the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs**

*are pleased to invite you to a side event on*

### **Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, an imperative to act**

*Tuesday, 23 October 2012*

*1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.*

*Conference Room 7 (NLB), UN Headquarters*

- Ambassador Benno Laggner of Switzerland
- Dr Ira Helfand, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War
- Dr Robert M’Tonga, International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War
- Dr Rebecca Johnson, International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

# NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

**//** Nuclear weapons have the capacity to kill millions, perhaps billions of people. Their effects are uncontrollable in space and time. Use of them, in any form or way, would cause widespread, severe and long-term damage to life on this planet,” declared Ambassador Laggner of Switzerland during the opening day of the thematic debate on nuclear weapons. He argued, “Developing stronger and more far-reaching international instruments to ban the use of nuclear weapons and eliminate them, like all other weapons of mass destruction, is therefore an imperative.”

Many delegations focused on the horrific humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons during the second week of First Committee, with representatives of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Algeria, Ecuador, Eritrea, Iran, Ireland, Myanmar, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Switzerland, Venezuela, and others highlighting such consequences as necessitating action on nuclear disarmament. Several delegations expressed a desire to see the humanitarian dimension of nuclear disarmament explored in more detail during the current nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review cycle and welcomed the upcoming conference in Oslo on this subject.

The Norwegian delegation explained that the conference would cover themes such as preparedness, protection, civilian loss of life and damage, humanitarian efforts and response capacity, refugee flows, health issues and climate effects, noting that “the conference will provide greater insight and a fact-based understanding of the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear detonation.”

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) welcomed the growing focus on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. It also noted that the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement’s resolution of November 2011 “calls on all States to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used and to pursue negotiations to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons through a legally binding international agreement.”

Indeed, drawing attention to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has encouraged governments to recognize their own responsibilities and rights when it comes to disarmament. Ambassador Strohal of Austria pointed out that disarmament is a global security issue in which all states have a stake.

## **Disarmament deficit**

This growing recognition that nuclear disarmament can no longer be left up to the nuclear weapon possessors alone is further emboldened by the general sense of their failure to comply with their disarmament obligations. Ecuador’s delegation noted that 40 years have elapsed with strict compliance by non-nuclear weapon states to their non-proliferation obligations but with-

out any specific achievements on nuclear disarmament. Calling for “due reciprocity” on disarmament, the Ecuadorian delegate asked how long the international community is expected to wait before the total elimination of nuclear weapons is achieved.

Mr. Jim Kelly of Ireland agreed that progress in implementing the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)’s disarmament agenda “has been far too slow,” arguing that those who renounced nuclear weapons under the NPT have kept their side of the bargain but that action by nuclear weapon states is overdue. Frustration is mounting over what many governments see as a fundamental failure of the NPT bargain and view the lack of tangible progress on nuclear disarmament as an indication that nuclear weapons will continue to be falsely perceived as guarantors of national security, which grossly undermines global security. Ambassador Valero of Venezuela expressed concern that new arguments are being developed to justify the maintenance and modernization of nuclear weapons, which indicates the “normalization of nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War context,” while the delegation of Ecuador argued that the retention of nuclear weapons is an attempt to preserve the security of a few at the cost of the security of the entire world.

Many governments are looking to the 2015 NPT Review Conference to deliver on nuclear disarmament. The Arab Group called for more “disarmament mechanisms” in the context of the NPT and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) emphasized that its “aspiration for the present NPT review cycle is no less than the adoption of additional concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament at the next Review Conference, in 2015.” Likewise, the Philippines delegation warned that the next NPT Review Conference “will need to make significant advances on a range of critical NPT issues, especially nuclear disarmament, in order to sustain the credibility and integrity of the Treaty.”

Most governments believe an additional instrument, such as a nuclear weapons convention, will be necessary to achieve nuclear disarmament. The NAM, and many of its members in their national statements, called for negotiation of an NWC. Some governments proposed additional paths forward: The Kazakh delegation called for a “Universal Declaration of a Nuclear Weapon-Free World” as a tool for motivating action on an NWC, while the Philippines’ delegation noted that it has worked to criminalize nuclear weapons “by vigorously pushing for including nuclear weapons in the list of prohibited weapons in the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court.”

## **Transparency and reporting**

Demands for nuclear disarmament during thematic debate on this subject were often accompanied by



requests for greater transparency from the nuclear weapon possessors. The Chair of the 2012 NPT Preparatory Committee, Ambassador Woolcott of Australia, acknowledged that there is a “genuine interest in and hunger for information” about what the nuclear weapon states “are doing to meet their commitments. He argued, “It may be a challenge, but the nuclear-weapon States need to feed that interest for information. Active transparency is in their interest.”

The Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative agreed that a “culture of greater transparency” is important for building confidence and achieving disarmament and explained that it continues to engage with the nuclear weapon states on the draft reporting form it has developed. Ireland’s delegation encouraged “substantive interim reports by the nuclear weapon states between now and 2014,” which would “enable the wider NPT membership to prepare a follow on set of Actions for the 2015 Review Conference.”

### **De-alerting**

Another concern for many states in the absence of disarmament has been the continued high-alert levels of many nuclear weapon systems. The De-alerting Group—Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, and Switzerland—described current alert levels as “anachronistic,” noting that “while tensions that marked the international security climate during the Cold War have lowered significantly, corresponding decreases in the alert levels of the arsenals of the largest nuclear-weapon States have not been forthcoming.” These states believe that de-alerting would “result in a significant nuclear disarmament dividend through a reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in nuclear doctrines and therefore security policies overall.”

### **Nuclear weapon possessors**

France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States highlighted the arsenal reductions they have made through bilateral or unilateral steps. They and China also highlighted their ongoing discussions, in particular their latest meeting in Beijing to discuss a “glossary of common definitions of nuclear terms”.

However, these reports of past actions appeared insufficient to placate the growing number of countries seeking tangible action on disarmament. The NAM emphasized that fulfillment of nuclear disarmament obligations should not be made conditional on confidence-building measures or other disarmament efforts. The Arab Group called on the P5 to “multiply their efforts beyond periodic meetings,” and the Republic of Korea called on them to “maintain the momentum in disarmament by further fulfilling their obligations under the NPT.” The EU and the Philippines called for more efforts to reduce non-strategic nuclear weapons.

The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) emphasized that however positive the steps taken by nuclear weapons states have been, “all these events and initiatives are still not enough to move us towards

the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.” Ambassador Román-Morey of Peru stressed that UNASUR states welcome the P5 meetings but do not consider them “in themselves an achievement,” stressing, “We expect concrete progress.” He also pointed that UNASUR states feel the interventions made by the nuclear weapon states during the 2012 NPT Preparatory committee “lacked ambition”.

Ambassador Kennedy of the United States criticized “calls for alternate, wholesale approaches to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.” She complained, “Disarmament is hard work. There are no shortcuts and no practical alternatives to the step-by-step approach. Trying to accomplish everything at once will distract us from more realistic efforts.”

In response, Ms. Nyhamar of Norway agreed, “There is no doubt that nuclear disarmament is not easy and requires hard work.” However, she argued, “That is why we cannot allow the current impasse in the machinery to prevail. And just as nuclear weapons concern us all, so the responsibility to work for a world without nuclear weapons rests with all UN Member states.”

Many non-nuclear weapon states also continued to criticize the nuclear weapon possessors for their investments in modernization of nuclear weapon arsenals and facilities. Ambassador Kennedy argued that the United States “is neither developing new nuclear weapons, nor are we pursuing any new missions. The investments we are making in infrastructure and necessary safety improvements should not be conflated or confused with weapons development.” However, US policy and budget documents officially commit the government to modernizing its nuclear bombs and warheads, delivery systems, and related facilities, which is why critiques of these investments are growing.

Some of the non-NPT nuclear weapon possessors also criticized the slow pace of disarmament efforts of the P5. Pakistan’s Ambassador Akram argued that these countries have “large inventories of conventional weapons and no disputes between them,” which means that they do not need to possess so many nuclear weapons.” He did not, however, speak about Pakistan’s own nuclear arsenal. Ambassador Sin Son Ho of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) likewise criticized the “major powers” for continuing “to rely on nuclear weapons in pursuit of strong-arm policy for monopoly, domination and interference.” Ambassador Mehta of India called for “progressive delegitimization of nuclear weapons” as an essential step to their elimination.

### **Resolutions**

While some of the nuclear disarmament-related resolutions were introduced during thematic debate, the tabled texts have not been circulated at time of writing. They will be discussed in the next edition of the *Monitor*. •

# NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION

Beatrice Fihn | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

During the second week, the discussion continued to show a significant difference between countries that view progress on non-proliferation as a condition for disarmament and those that believe the two are mutually reinforcing.

For example, the French ambassador stated that proliferation is the most serious threat to international peace and security and is “a hindrance to progress in nuclear disarmament.” The US said that proliferation concerns of Iran, Syria, and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) “undermine confidence in the nonproliferation regime and they stand in the way of our shared disarmament goals.”

On the other hand, South Africa, Mexico, Ireland, and many other non-nuclear weapon states expressed concerns selective approach to emphasize non-proliferation over disarmament. Ireland’s delegation argued it does not accept that more progress is required on non-proliferation before progress can be achieved on disarmament. “Frankly speaking, there has not been enough progress on disarmament,” the Irish delegation said. The representative of Cuba expressed concerns over the selective approach of giving priority to preventing horizontal proliferation while ignoring concerns of vertical proliferation.

## **Safeguards**

The representative of the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Shaw, reported that 172 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) non-nuclear weapon states have comprehensive safeguards agreement in force, while 13 countries “have yet to meet their obligations under the NPT” by concluding such a CSA. Mr. Shaw also noted that 118 countries now have an Additional Protocol (AP) in force.

Most speakers supported the IAEA safeguards system, and the Union of South American Nations highlighted the contribution to safeguards made by the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials. The European Union (EU), Netherlands, and Russia emphasized the importance for all states to conclude a CSA and AP, while Norway and Netherlands argued that these two now constitute the verification norm. Iraq drew attention to that it has ratified the AP in June this year.

Pakistan’s Ambassador Akram called for the development of a “new inspections regime” that can be “applied equitably, both to nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states, in accordance with their obligations.” He argued that this new regime must be “criteria-based and non-discriminatory” in order to promote “proliferation-resistant” nuclear energy programmes.

## **Other tools**

The EU, Denmark, Togo, Georgia, Thailand, Norway, and Serbia supported the implementation of UN Security

Council resolution (UNSCR) 1540. The delegation of Macedonia highlighted its work on UNSCR 1540 and on the CBRN Centers of Excellence while the representative of Serbia noted it has adopted a national action plan for implementing this resolution. Georgia, Togo, and Thailand stated they have joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and expressed support for more work in this area. Ethiopia called for further ratifications on the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. Israel noted that it adheres to the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, and implements “de facto” the Wassenaar Arrangement.

## **Iran**

The issue of Iran continued to draw attention from many speakers. Denmark, Canada, Kuwait, the EU, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, and Norway all called on Iran to implement the resolutions of the Security Council and the IAEA Board of Governors and to comply with its safeguard agreements. The European Union, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Denmark also expressed support for the E3+3 process. Ireland believed that Iran should answer to “the many legitimate questions” about the nature of its nuclear programme.

Israel argued that without “halting and reversing” the Iranian nuclear programme, “it will be very difficult, if not impossible” to strengthen the existing non-proliferation regime. France noted that if Iran would not respond constructively to the E3+3 process, it would continue to step up the diplomatic pressure on Iran, in particular with new sanctions. Canada even went so far as to state that “Iran’s nuclear program can only be seen as an effort to acquire a nuclear weapon capability.”

In its statement under the nuclear cluster, Iran argued that its enrichment activity is under full IAEA monitoring and is for the purpose of producing medical isotopes.

## **DPRK**

Denmark, Canada, France, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Netherlands, and Norway called on the DPRK to implement all relevant resolutions. The EU, Norway, and France condemned the attempted launch of a ballistic missile in April, urged the DPRK to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, and called on it to return to full compliance with the NPT and IAEA safeguards. Japan also called on the DPRK to comply with the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks.

DPRK argued that it was confronted by the extreme nuclear threats from the US, and therefore responded with its own nuclear deterrent. DPRK considered that the only absolute solution to the issue of proliferation is nuclear disarmament since proliferation stemmed

from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear powers.

### **Syria**

Canada, Norway, and the Netherlands called on Syria to implement the relevant resolutions and cooperate with the IAEA. Israel noted that Syria has not yet declared the nuclear fuel destined for the Deir al Zour site, "and its whereabouts in Syria remain a mystery."

Israel also argued that the "volatile" situation in Syria is a reminder of the need to secure nuclear and chemical materials, and to prevent illicit trafficking and terrorism.

### **Nuclear security**

Many speakers welcomed the recent Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in Seoul earlier this year. For example, the EU supported the NSS process and called for further progress in nuclear security worldwide and emphasized its work on preventing nuclear terrorism. The Republic of Korea hoped that the trust built at the Nuclear Security Summit "will lead to further progress

in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation." Netherlands highlighted its commitment to nuclear security and combatting nuclear terrorism, and drew attention to the third Nuclear Security Summit that will be held in The Hague in March 2014. Lithuania welcomed the NSS meeting and noted the establishment of the Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence in Lithuania, and argued it would be a good platform for achieving the goals set at the NSS. Togo drew attention to regional work in Africa on nuclear security, while Thailand announced it will hold a regional meeting in advance of the next NSS.

Algeria underlined the important role by the IAEA in advancing nuclear security and establishing nuclear safety standards. Zambia urged all other African states that have not yet done so to become a member of the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa. Canada pointed out that it has committed \$367 million through its Global Partnership Program until 2018, in order to enhance work to reduce the threat posed by nuclear, radiological, biological, or chemical terrorism. •

## **NUCLEAR ENERGY AND THE FUEL CHAIN**

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

I ncreasing the safety of nuclear power plants has received ongoing attention since the disaster at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Station in 2011. During the second week of First Committee, several countries indicated their support for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)'s work to develop nuclear safety standards. Others, however, cautioned that Fukushima explosions demonstrated the inherent dangers in nuclear energy.

Romania's delegation expressed hope that governments will strike a "balance" between the "nuclear renaissance" and the "consequences and lessons learned from the Fukushima accident," while Bahrain called on states to give priority to nuclear safety and security with the greatest transparency. Algeria's delegation reaffirmed the central role of the IAEA in nuclear safety related matters.

Zambia's delegation said it is "alive to the destructive power of nuclear energy and its implications on global safety and security," citing in particular the Fukushima disaster. However, Zambia and others indicated that nuclear power plants are still a viable source of energy for some countries and in this regard indicated their support for the IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan. The European Union called on states to elevate the safety of nuclear power plants "to the highest level" and to strengthen nuclear safety measures worldwide.

Not all countries remain convinced that nuclear power can be made safe. The delegation of Timor-Leste argued that the disaster at Fukushima exemplified the overwhelming danger of nuclear power on human health and the environment. It encouraged governments "to work towards renewable energy and energy efficiency as the keys to ensuring the safety of people and protecting the environment for a sustainable future."

Gabon's delegation also raised the problem of nuclear waste, calling on states to ensure its "orderly management".

Some delegates raised the issue of multilateralization of the fuel cycle. The EU noted it is providing financial support to the future IAEA low-enriched uranium bank. The Serbian delegation highlighted its "project for the repatriation of spent nuclear fuel from the Vinca Institute of Nuclear Sciences to the Russian Federation as the country of origin," which is carried out with the assistance of international partners. Through this project, "Serbia has joined the group of countries no longer having enriched uranium on their territories."

A few delegations highlighted the importance of the IAEA's technical cooperation programmes. The US ambassador highlighted her country's financial contributions to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Fund and the IAEA's Peaceful Uses Initiative. •

# NUCLEAR WEAPON AND WMD FREE ZONES

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs) make a significant contribution to the overall multilateral strategy for achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. This has been a leitmotif amongst the statements of delegates throughout the First Committee's thematic debate. While many delegates made general assertions regarding the importance of NWFZs, some also made explicit reference to where the significance of such zones lie. Thailand's representative, for example, commented on the "pivotal role" they play in the area of confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy. The delegate for the African Group noted their importance derives not just in the fact that they ban nuclear weapons within states, but also that they ban stationing such weapons within the zone.

States also continued to stress the value in holding the 2012 Conference on establishing a WMDfZ in the Middle East, in pursuance of the 1995 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) resolution and 2010 NPT outcome document. Almost all states referring to the conference commended the initial efforts of the Finnish Government and the conference facilitator, Jaako Laajava, in preparing for the conference, and urged all relevant actors to continue consultations to ensure that the conference is successful.

However, while the conference is an undeniably crucial step for advancing towards a Middle Eastern WMDfZ, more work will be needed. As the delegates of both the Philippines and the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) pointed out, the conference should be regarded as a "first step" to start the "long and difficult

process" for establishing the WMDfZ. Such sentiments were also expressed at a side event during the second week of the First Committee, convened to discuss the possibilities of establishing a MENWfZ. For example, Mr. Hillel Schenker (Palestine-Israel Journal) noted that the Conference is merely a way "to set the [MENWfZ] process in motion," and Mr. Alyn Ware (Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament) affirmed that the MEC would be "just one of a number of elements necessary to create a MENWfZ."

Once again, concern was voiced over Israel's non-adherence to the NPT. Bahrain, among other Middle Eastern countries, called on Israel to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under the system of international inspection. Iran brusquely criticized Israel's failure to join the NPT and subject its nuclear facilities IAEA safeguards as "the only impediment in the way of the ... establishment of a MENWfZ." In this context, both Syria and Iran implored the international community to exert pressure on Jerusalem so as to ensure that it promptly accedes to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state party. Israel, by contrast, censured Iran for its nuclear programme, alluding to the difficulty, if not impossibility, of establishing a MEWMDfZ without Iran first reversing the programme. Israeli Ambassador Ron Prosor also urged UN member states to vote against the "belligerent" and "contentious" resolution being tabled by the Arab League, which he alleged "constitutes an annual declaration by its sponsors that they prefer to continue trying to ... isolate Israel, rather than engage Israel in a cooperative manner."

Issues relevant to the South East Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWfZ) also received much attention during the second week of this year's First Committee. Many states, including Thailand, the Philippines, Japan, and Myanmar, persisted in their calls to the P5 to sign and ratify the protocol of the Bangkok Treaty at an early date. In response, three P5 members, the United Kingdom, the United States, and France, indicated their willingness to sign the protocol as soon as possible.

The Treaty of Tlateloco, which prohibits nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, was also often brought into the limelight of the thematic debate. Representatives from Ecuador and UNASUR, among others, continued to urge the nuclear weapon states to withdraw their interpretative declarations to the protocols of the Treaty. The states of the Central Asian NWFZ delivered a joint statement commending their zone for its contributions to regional and international peace and security. Finally, all members of the P5 highlighted their recent signing of parallel declarations with Mongolia on the country's nuclear weapon free status, which Mongolia welcomed in its statement. •





# NUCLEAR TESTING

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

The popular clamour for entry into force (EIF) of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) continued throughout the second week of this year's First Committee. The majority of delegates reiterated their countries' interest in the universalisation of the Treaty, calling upon non-ratified Annex II countries to follow in the footsteps of recently ratified states.

Several delegates from non-ratified states indicate their country's intention to join the CTBT. Thailand, for example, reaffirmed its "strong commitment towards accelerating the ratification process for the CTBT." Ambassador Kennedy of the United States also noted the full commitment of the US to pursuing CTBT ratification. Myanmar's ambassador declared, "Despite its priorities and preoccupations with the political, economic and social reforms towards a democratic society, Myanmar is ... considering to ratify [the disarmament treaties to which it is committed]." In addition, Ambassador Hamid Al Bayat of Iraq announced the approval of the Iraqi Council of Representatives on 9 October 2012 to ratify the CTBT. Georgia's delegate was one of many to welcome and commend these renewed political commitments to pursue treaty ratification, claiming that they "give us solid grounds for optimism."

Less sanguine perspectives on EIF of the CTBT were also conveyed. Canada argued that EIF "remains elusive," while Botswana expressed concern over the "sluggish progress" made towards universal Treaty ratification, which "could endanger the already fragile nuclear disarmament landscape." Moreover, Mr. Tibor Toth, Executive Secretary General of the CTBT Organisation, warned that "the Organisation is subject to dangerous fatigue" pending the Treaty's formal implementation. He alluded to the Treaty's potential for languishing in limbo, the CTBTO and its verification system subject to

erosion. In this context, an array of states emphasised the imperative of upholding a nuclear test moratorium and refraining from any action contrary to the provisions of the CTBT.

As in the first week, several states, including the United Kingdom and Netherlands, were keen to highlight their CTBT commitment by mentioning the ways in which they cooperate with and offer support to the CTBTO. For example, the European Union delegate noted that specific EU funding directed at a number of projects is underway "to facilitate the participation of developing countries in the verification regime." Speaking in the thematic debate, Canada's representative cast light on her country's recently concluded contribution arrangement with the CTBTO, which seeks to provide "state-of-the-art Canadian equipment to bolster the CTBTO's on-site inspection capabilities." Similarly, Kazakhstan stressed that it is helping to enhance the CTBTO's International Monitoring System (IMS) through development and refinement of "its own five national cutting edge 24-hour tracking stations as part of the global effort."

Numerous representatives, including those of Serbia, Japan, Mexico and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, welcomed the Joint Statement produced at the 6th CTBT Ministerial Meeting (held this year on 27 September). The statement called for the EIF of the Treaty and was co-sponsored by over 100 states. Mr. Tibor Toth also lauded the 'Friends of the CTBT' Ministerial Meeting, describing it as "an inspiring example of the political will needed to make progress." Australia, Mexico, and New Zealand promoted their resolution on the CTBT that recognises the important role of the Treaty as an instrument for achieving disarmament and non-proliferation. •

# NEGATIVE SECURITY ASSURANCES

Aarushi Prakash | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Reiterating their appeals from last week, a number of countries in the general and thematic debates insisted on the need for a universal, unconditional, and legally-binding treaty on negative security assurances (NSA). The Non-Aligned Movement reaffirmed it as a matter of "high priority".

Many countries agree that NSAs are imperative for the security of the states and to bridge the existing trust deficit between nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states. The delegation of Belarus asserted that confidence and predictability is the key to relations between

states, while Bangladesh referred to NSAs as the "legitimate right" of non-nuclear weapon states. Ambassador Byrganym Aitimova, of Kazakhstan reiterated her President's statement at the General Assembly 2011 calling for the drafting of an international legally-binding instrument on NSAs.

The European Union's representative argued that positive and negative security assurances play an important role in the non-proliferation and disarmament regime, noting that it welcomes the relevant adjustments in the UK and US nuclear postures. •

# MISSILES AND ANTI-MISSILE SYSTEMS

Aarushi Prakash | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

During the remainder of general debate as well as the thematic debate on nuclear weapons, the issue of missiles and anti-missile systems received scant attention. Ambassador Christian Strohal noted that delivery systems for weapons of mass destruction often risk being sidelined in these discussions.

## Missiles

In the thematic debate, the current Chair of Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOG), the ambassador of the Republic of Korea (ROK), touched on some important issues. HCOG is the sole instrument against ballistic missiles. 134 countries have subscribed to the HCOG and the UN General Assembly has adopted resolutions in support of the code in 2005, 2008, and 2010.

The ROK ambassador noted that subscribing to the HCOG does not impose financial burdens on the subscribing state, but that it builds confidence and transparency amongst states, making an invaluable contribution to international peace and security. He emphasized that the Code is a vision for the future and much work still remains if HCOG is to become a source of trust and confidence in ballistic missile activities. The Austrian ambassador joined the ROK ambassador in calling for further universalization of the HCOG.

Some delegations focused on countries they consider to be of concern. The European Union reiterated its condemnation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s ballistic missile programme and its launch conducted on 13 April 2012 as well as Iran's missile programme. The EU called on DPRK to abandon its ballistic missile programme and adhere to UN Security Council resolutions 1695, 1718, and 1874.

The DPRK delegation argued, "They are alleging that under the UNSC resolutions, the DPRK cannot conduct any launch using ballistic missile technology and even a satellite launch for peaceful purpose should not be allowed. If those countries are free to launch space satellites and only the DPRK is excluded, it is an intolerable infringement on the sovereignty of the DPRK."

## Anti-missile systems

During the general debate, the Pakistani ambassador identified the need for a universal and non-discriminatory agreement on the development, deployment, and proliferation of anti-ballistic missile (ABM) systems. During the thematic debate, China's delegation called for abandoning the development of missile systems that undermine global strategic balance, while Belarus and Russia criticized plans to deploy unilateral ABM systems. •



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# BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Irene Pugnali | NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

The second week of the First Committee's work began with the participation of the Deputy Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Mrs. Grace Asirwatham. After recalling that the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is the first multilateral agreement banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction on a non-discriminatory basis and under strict verification, Mrs. Asirwatham underlined the major goals of the Convention. One of its core objectives is the complete destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles. In the aftermath of the failure by the two major possessor states to eliminate their arsenals by the final extended deadline, CWC states parties assessed the impact this event could have and spurred the possessor states to reach the goal in the shortest time possible. Nevertheless, Mrs. Asirwatham acknowledged that, regarding the total destruction of chemical agents, the United States and the Russian Federation are on track. She anticipated that only one percent of chemical weapons will still exist by 2016.

However, despite this encouraging data, a number of challenges still remain on the path towards the total eradication of the threat of the chemical catastrophe. Mrs. Asirwatham, as well as the Macedonian delegation, recalled the necessity to achieve global adherence to the Convention. Another crucial challenge is represented by the possibility of chemical warfare agents being produced in commercial facilities. The Deputy Director-General of the OPCW argued that cooperation with the chemical industry is a fundamental prerogative for the success of the Convention. Along with this form of cooperation, the tangible success depends also on the commitment of states parties, which are asked to carry out comprehensive efforts in implementing the Convention at the domestic level, through the adoption of legislation consistent with the Convention.

The other two crucial challenges underscored by Mrs. Asirwatham are the re-emergence of chemical weapons and the growing convergence between chemistry and biology. Both of them require progressively greater attention: on the one side, the focus will be put on industry verification system and, on the other, on developments in science and technology that may affect the implementation of the Convention.

The OPCW Deputy Director-General, together with Canada, Ireland, Macedonia, and Nepal, also recalled the importance of the forthcoming Third Review Conference of the CWC. From the Canadian delegation's standpoint, this occasion constitutes the perfect environment for reviewing, among other issues, the role of the OPCW.

A few delegations highlighted the situation in Syria. Canada, Ireland, and Israel called on Syria to never use its chemical weapons.

Concerning biological weapons, delegations reiterated their satisfaction with the Seventh Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and with the outcomes achieved at that occasion, particularly the "forward-looking outcome document which [...] established a sponsorship program to facilitate the participation of developing countries at future meetings," as noticed by Botswana. Nevertheless, the necessity of further strengthening the Convention is of utmost relevance to many states parties. The Iranian delegation stressed the need for a non-discriminatory, legally-binding protocol on verification, inviting those states that rejects the resumption of the negotiations for such a protocol to reconsider their policy. The Philippines suggested exploring the inter-relation between biosecurity/biosafety and public health concerns, highlighting a possible connection with the activities carried out by the World Health Organization and the World Animal Health Organization •

# DISARMAMENT MACHINERY

Beatrice Fihn | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

The debate on the disarmament machinery continued during the second week, with the tabling of two resolutions intended to move disarmament negotiations forward. One, by Canada, addresses the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) and on the other, by Austria, Mexico, and Norway, deals with nuclear disarmament.

Canadian Ambassador Golberg highlighted the need to "think outside the box" on FMCT. She explained that Canada's annual resolution on this subject intends to begin a process towards a treaty, but "without replacing the work of the CD". While this resolution has been submitted for many years, this time it includes a deci-

sion to set up a Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) to discuss ways forward for negotiations on an FMCT.

Austria, together with Mexico and Norway, tabled a resolution that calls for the establishment of an open-ended working group that would convene in Geneva for up to three weeks during 2013 in order to "develop concrete proposals to take forward multilateral negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons." Ambassador Strohal of Austria clarified that this proposal "is not about creating a new disarmament institution and by no means intended to undermine existing ones." Instead, he argued, it

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aims at bringing impetus to disarmament negotiations. He expressed hope that it would be an opportunity for the disarmament community to overcome the inertia. The Norwegian highlighted its support for resolutions that “will enable us to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations by exploring possible new ways to do so,” arguing, “We’ve got to try.”

The two resolutions are slightly different in the approach taken to move things forward. The Canadian resolution sets up a group of governmental experts to meet in 2014 and 2015 that will cease activities if the Conference on Disarmament (CD) resumes work. It also focuses on discussing substantive elements of a future treaty.

The resolution by Norway, Austria, and Mexico sets up an open-ended working group in 2013 only, but it makes no reference to the CD and an eventual programme of work there. Instead of focusing on content of a future treaty, the working group will “develop concrete proposals to take forward multilateral negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.”

### **Reactions**

Secretary-General of the CD, Mr. Tokayev noted that he appreciated that none of the drafts currently circulating “profess to squarely sideline the CD.” He argued, “In the area of nuclear disarmament a like-minded forum can go only so far. The Philippines saw great potential in both the Canadian and Austria, Mexico, Norway resolutions as “such proposals afford the opportunity for the world community to begin work and have the advantage of being inclusive.”

Japan, Lithuania, Australia, and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) all supported the Canadian proposal and the European Union said it welcomed any initiatives to move the FMCT issue forward.

Ecuador raised some concerns about what it sees as the intention to begin negotiations on FMCT on the margins of the CD. The delegation stated that only simultaneous treatment of this topic with other issues of the CD “can guarantee that we are making progress on both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.” Ecuador continued by emphasizing that FMCT negotiations must include existing stockpiles.

The US stated that it has initiated consultations between the P5 and other countries to unblock FMCT negotiations in the CD, and to prepare for what “we expect to be technically challenging negotiations”. The UK also noted that the P5 countries have been working together to renew efforts to promote negotiations in the CD, but none of the P5 delegations expressed support or opposition to the Canadian resolution.

However, Ambassador Kennedy of the US was clear about the resolution from Norway, Austria, and Mexico, as she stated that the US does not support proposals to set up new UN mechanisms to address nuclear disarmament. She argued that “such mechanisms would fare no better than existing bodies.”

### **General comments on the disarmament machinery**

Norway pointed out that the deadlocked fora are “not open to all interested countries and relevant stakeholders, they are completely tied up in procedural knots, and they do not work.”

Pakistan noted that the CD receives a lot of blame for inaction, but argued that similar problems were found in the UN Disarmament Commission and the First Committee. Being the only country that opposed the latest version of a programme of work in the CD, Pakistan argued that the lack of progress was not due to the rules of procedure or consensus rule, but to the “external political environment,” such as “discriminatory nuclear cooperation policies, double standards and selectivity, guided by power and politics and profits.”

While expressing concerns with the deadlock, France pointed out that the CD, with its consensus rule and the participation of all states with key capabilities, guarantees that agreements will be truly universal and will make a real contribution to international security. The French representative stated, “We need to take this into account if we are to avoid finding ourselves on the wrong track.” China however did not seem to share the sense of frustration expressed by other speakers, but commended the “in-depth exchange of views” and “good proposals” that had taken place during the thematic debates on the core issues.

During the Thursday, there was a brief discussion focused on the workings of the First Committee, its high number of resolutions and many requests for reports by the Secretary-General. UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Ms. Angela Kane drew attention to the current economic climate and encouraged states to amend resolutions requesting annual reports to biennial or triennial reports. While arguing that it would not detract from the substantive importance of any resolutions, “it will help saving the expense of compiling, translating, and publishing reports—especially in cases where very few Member States have shown little interest in expressing their views.” In the discussion afterwards, it was pointed out that once adopted, resolutions are still valid until the General Assembly decides otherwise and several speakers argued that there was therefore not necessary to repeat resolutions every year. •



# SIDE EVENT: FIFTY YEARS AFTER THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS: NEXT STEPS ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT AND NON-PROLIFERATION

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

To commemorate fifty years since the Cuban Missile Crisis, a side event was organized by the Arms Control Association (ACA) in which today's current regional nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation challenges were examined by four experts in the field: Hans Kristensen (Federation of American Scientists), Lt. General (ret.) R.R. Raghavan (Center for Security Analysis), Dr. Sameh Aboul-Enein (Deputy Assistant Foreign Minister for Disarmament Affairs), and Daryl Kimball (ACA).

Opening the discussion, Mr. Kristensen reflected on current trends in US and Russian nuclear reductions and the likely role and size of their arsenals in the decades ahead. Mr. Kristensen lamented the slow implementation of New START, which has seen a "very modest" reduction of only 106 warheads between the two countries since its entry into force 18 months ago. He emphasized that the US and Russia have evolved into two different kind of postures, favoring different types of warheads; this has led to a transformed strategic dynamic between the two states, whereby their nuclear reductions are influenced by taking account of the disparity that exists between their arsenals. Several options for further US/Russian nuclear reductions were also outlined, including the reduction of missile systems and number of warheads on the missiles, the reduction of alert levels, or continuation of a treaty based reduction regime (which has the advantage of being broadened to include other forms of weapon systems).

Lt. General Raghavan summarised South Asian realities within the current global nuclear context. He spoke optimistically, listing many positive regional developments, including the resumption of negotiations between senior officials of Pakistan and India, implementation of legislation and command and control systems from both countries, and the great restraint on nuclear rhetoric on the subcontinent. However, as he explained, international terrorism and its extensive reach, an "intangible danger," could easily upset the current arrangements for stability in South Asia. Nuclear reductions in the region could also be influenced by changes in the global political context.

Dr. Aboul-Enein shared his perspective on the future of multilateral disarmament conventions in the Middle East. After noting the increasingly influential role of public opinion on formulation of security-related foreign policy in the region, Dr. Aboul-Enein discussed the technical provisions that a Middle-Eastern Nuclear Weapons-Free-Zone (MENWFZ) should include, such as the dismantlement or destruction of all nuclear weapon facilities and devices in the territories of the zone, and the banning of testing in the

zone. After beseeching the Middle East to follow the scientific and institutional examples of existing NW-FZs in other regions, he lauded the South African example of dismantlement, which "shows it's possible to [voluntarily] roll back a nuclear weapon capacity."

Mr. Kimball conveyed a largely sanguine perspective on the CTBT ratification prospects in the United States. He argued that "securing the Treaty's ratification in the US Senate ... is within reach by 2013/2014" so long as certain political conditions exist and President Obama is re-elected. In addition, Mr. Kimball alluded to China's pro-CTBT stance, highlighting that it has provided no plausible justification for its non-adherence to the Treaty. As such, he advised that China outline its timeline for ratification in this year's First Committee.

During the Q&A session, the issue of US sub-critical testing was raised, with one audience member questioning whether it violates the principle of the CTBT. According to Mr. Kimball, such tests do not contravene the Treaty (which bans all nuclear explosions) since sub-critical explosions are not generated by nuclear material and are not being used for new weapons developments. Another point of interest was the difference between a de facto taboo against nuclear testing and formal entry into force (EIF) of the CTBT. Mr Kimball clarified the distinction: without the CTBT's official EIF, the CTBTO and Executive Council lack the legal authority to investigate possible nuclear events, "diminishing to some extent the international community's ability to detect and deter nuclear tests." •



Jared Rodriguez / [truthout.org](http://truthout.org)

# SIDE EVENT: THE IMPORTANCE AND POSSIBILITIES OF ESTABLISHING A WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION FREE ZONE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

A side event organized by several NGOs, including the NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security, provided an opportunity for an array of eminent panelists to discuss steps for surmounting the hurdles to the creation of a Middle Eastern zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (MEWMDFZ). As they shared their views on the best ways to promote such a zone, debate oscillated between optimism and pessimism regarding the outcome of the upcoming Middle East Conference (MEC) and the future of a MEWMDFZ.

Peter Weiss, Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, opened the discussion, bemoaning that international humanitarian law is increasingly “dropped out of the discussion on nuclear weapons”. He implored civil society and governments alike to reaffirm the importance of the law in dealing with WMDs, since the illegality of weapons is the “one element of the discussion on a MEWMDFZ that is not subject to debate.” Mr. Weiss predicted an unlikely Israeli attendance at the MEC, and cast even doubt on Israel’s inclination for nuclear weapons abandonment unless one of two events occur: either, a verifiable and binding agreement is created in which all Middle Eastern countries abolish and refrain from acquiring WMDs, or a Nuclear Weapons Convention is created and ratified by all nuclear weapon possessors.

Alyn Ware, Parliamentarians for Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (PNND), emphasized the influential role that parliamentarians can play in supporting the establishment of a MEWMDFZ. As he explained, parliamentarians can raise issues relevant to a MEWMDFZ (whether through the media, public forums or the parliamentary system itself), thereby helping to build the necessary traction and political momentum. They also have the capacity to reach out to other countries and forge Joint Parliamentary Statements, such as the one for a MEWMDFZ that was recently drafted and released by the PNND.

Emad Kiraie, American Iranian Council, cast light on Iran’s willingness to move forward with a MEWMDFZ. Given Tehran’s initiation of discussions on the zone in 1974, its signature of most nuclear non-proliferation agreements, and the total lack of evidence demonstrating an Iranian nuclear weapons capability, he argued that Iran should not be seen as an obstacle to the establishment of such a zone, “but rather as a partner” in its creation. The real obstacles blocking progress on the zone, he underlined, will be Israel, tensions and recent upheavals in the region, and the militarization of the Middle East. Despite this, he remained hopeful

about prospects for a MEWMDFZ, since two thirds of the Israeli public support a Middle Eastern Zone and there is a “very positive energy” emanating from the younger generation of the region following the Arab Spring.

Hillel Schenker, Palestine-Israel Journal, perceptively described Israel’s perspective on a MEWMDFZ, explaining that such a zone is “simply not on the agenda” until a comprehensive peace is established in the region. Getting out of this bind requires the creation of “two parallel tracks”—one that sets out a roadmap towards progressing on a MEWMDFZ and the other that moves forward the process of attaining Arab/Israeli peace. He cited the Arab Peace Initiative as an important tool for facilitating this parallel process.

Hal Fieveson, Princeton University’s Program on Science and Global Security, looked at the issue in relation to fissile material control in the region, outlining options for production-free arrangements that, while no alternative to a MEWMDFZ, might represent “way stations” towards such a zone. Zia Mian, also from Princeton University’s Program on Science and Global Security, contested this, asserting that “the issue is not about ending the production of fissile material by Israel,” but rather, eliminating the weapons that Israel currently possesses. Dr. Mian also drew the United States into the equation, attesting that a MEWMDFZ hinges greatly on the US, since it is the US that shapes the security calculus in all Middle Eastern countries.

The Q&A session led panelists to further expand on US influence in the region and detail possible action the US could take in regards to the issue. Peter Weiss claimed that time is wasted in telling the US what to do; instead, time should be spent communicating to the American public the negative role being played by the US in keeping the world from achieving certain objectives. Mr. Emad advocated that the US look internally and abandon its own nuclear arsenal, and externally, by reorienting how it applies its policies in the region so that other Middle Eastern states no longer perceive it as one with Israel. It was also noted by one member that there is scant mention of the MEC by the press or by the UN; with only two months remaining before the alleged commencement of the Conference, he underlined the necessity and responsibility of better informing the global public. •

## SIDE EVENT: FINISHING THE JOB: DELIVERING A BULLET PROOF ATT

Rohie Drammeh | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

The negotiating conference of an arms trade treaty (ATT) held in July earlier this year was intended to be the conclusion of long process towards regulating the international arms trade. However, after a month of negotiations, most states and civil society actors were left disappointed as on the final day of the conference the United States asked for more time to consider the draft treaty text.

The Permanent Missions of Mexico and Trinidad and Tobago hosted a side event on the ATT together with Control Arms. Not one seat was empty as many were interested in hearing what the panellists thought of the failure of the ATT conference held in July, and of the future for the treaty.

Ambassador Eden Charles of Trinidad and Tobago spoke on behalf of the Caribbean Community. He argued that the draft treaty text of the conference was deficient because of the lack of ammunition. He argued that ammunition must be in the scope of the treaty, since it then would be subject to control and reporting. In the final draft, ammunition was only in the export section, which Ambassador Charles argued wasn't sufficient enough. "A gun is only lethal once supplied with ammunition," he said, noting that there is an abundance of ammunition in conflict zones that allows for indiscriminate firing and affects non-combatants and civilian infrastructure.

Mr. Deepayan Basu Ray, representative of Oxfam International, said that the draft of an arms trade treaty is a step forward in the process. However, the vast majority of states wanted a robust and effective treaty, and many were disappointed in the lack of that outcome. He argued that the draft has a number of problems and it is seen as much too weak, and that the process of drafting it had been problematic. Mr. Basu Ray also mentioned that the inclusion of record-keep-

ing should be in the treaty, as well as the requirement that states submit reports.

Ms. Nathalie Weizman, representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), mentioned some problematic aspects of the draft. She noted that not only are some phrases too vague and therefore can be subject to different interpretations, but there are also loopholes and gaps in the draft such as those related to genocide, war crimes, and the responsibility of states in Article 3.

Mr. Roy Isbister, representative of Saferworld, said that many articles of the draft text need to be read in reference to other articles, as otherwise it only creates confusion. He also argued that one must be careful to not "un-invent the wheel" and go backwards in this process. Mr. Isbister also highlighted that the current draft text has a number of problems and loopholes in its articles that weaken the text considerably.

In his conclusion of the event, the Chair Dr. Roberto Dondisch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Mexico pointed out that a treaty can also be weakened when countries that refuse to sign or ratify a treaty get a veto power over something of which they have chosen to not be a part. He emphasized that the standards of the ATT should not be lowered because of that and noted that there is not unlimited time to come up with a robust and satisfactory ATT, as it is already overdue.

The general comments at the end of the event were hopeful that from now until March 2013 there will be other opportunities to discuss the treaty, to carefully look over the text and at what needs to be improved, and to include civil society in the process to achieve the progress that is needed. The key points that were expressed were to use the time until the next negotiations conference wisely, and to highlight the voice of the international community in the process. •

## SIDE EVENT: DE-ALERTING

Aarushi Prakash | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Although the cold war has ended, a large number of nuclear weapons remain on high alert, ready for launch on short notice. The status of these weapons was the topic of a side event held by the Swiss and New Zealand Foreign Ministries on 17 October.

The main focus of the side event was the discussion and presentation on a study "Reducing Alert Rates of Nuclear Weapons" by Hans M. Kristensen and Matthew McKinzie, published by the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNDIR), with support from the Swiss government.

Opening the event, Ambassador Benno Laggner of Switzerland argued that high alerts levels are unnecessary and dangerous. Keeping nuclear weapons on high alert levels contradicts the goal of achieving total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons, he noted.

Hans Kirstensen explained that the United States and Russia maintain about 900 nuclear weapons on high alert each; France 80; and the United Kingdom 48. Other states possessing nuclear arsenals do not have alerted weapons. For the United States and Russia, weapons on ICBMs can be launched within a few min-

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utes of an order to do so, and US weapons on SLBMs can be launched within 12 minutes of such an order.

Kristensen questioned why it is necessary to have such high alert levels after the Cold War has ended. The answer from both the US and Russian governments, he explained, is: “because the other side has theirs on high alert”. The basic driver is the perceived need to be able to carry out a preemptive strike in a crisis. However, their study finds that both the United States and Russia could have their forces in a de-alerted status, undergo a first strike, and still be able to carry out a devastating second strike.

Advocates of de-alerting argue that there could be grave risk of misunderstanding or misuse or accident involved in keeping the weapons at high alert. Meanwhile, the opponents argue that maintaining high alert levels is critical for preserving stability during a crisis situation, to prevent a “nuclear re-alerting race” that could prompt a nuclear weapon state to launch its nuclear weapons first. Kristensen described this latter argument as a straw man, as it ignores that US and Russian nuclear postures today already include plans to “generate” forces in a crisis, surging and dispersing forces, and increasing alert rates and warhead loading. If a re-alerting race is destabilizing in the future, then that means it is also destabilizing in today’s scenario.

Kristensen also observed that already implemented de-alerting measures, such as removing bombs from aircraft, were opposed at the time as destabilizing, but

proved not to be so when executed. Nuclear weapons on high alert prolong the competitive nuclear relationship. De-alerting is not destabilizing.

The second speaker was Dr. Zia Mian, a research scientist with the Program on Science and Global Security at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University. Dr. Mian stated that the issue of de-alerting has been discussed for two decades and nuclear weapons can be de-alerted unilaterally. He observed that the people who are actually responsible for launching of these weapons publicly argue that de-alerting is feasible and desirable, including former US strategic commanders Lee Butler, Eugene Habiger, and recently James Cartwright. Moreover, as presidential candidates George W. Bush and Barack Obama supported de-alerting, and it received support from the Shultz, Nunn, Perry, and Kissinger group.

Why, then, do nuclear forces remain on high alert? Mian observed that this posture keeps lots of people extremely busy performing what are perceived to be urgent and important activities. Also, there is a “strategic culture” centered on the imperative of preventing and responding to surprise attacks. Mian also noted the tension between arguing for de-alerting on the basis of the ability to carry out retaliatory attacks and the emerging humanitarian approach to nuclear disarmament.

*John Burroughs, Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, contributed to this article. •*

## SIDE EVENT: ACCOUNTABILITY FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Eloise Watson | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Nuclear weapon states (NWS) are accountable to the rest of the global community for demonstrating their nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) article VI commitments; this has been a longstanding expectation especially among non-nuclear weapons states. A side event moderated by Ray Acheson (Reaching Critical Will) was organized to discuss the general weakness of this accountability by NWS, with panelists offering ideas for strengthening such accountability so as to render more equitable the NPT.

Cesar Jaramillo, Project Ploughshares, provided a brief analysis of reporting by states pursuant to their NPT commitments. The obligation of countries to submit annual reports concerning their disarmament progress is a key accountability and confidence-building measure, but one that has been interpreted differently by states since it was introduced in 2002. As Mr. Jaramillo elucidated, there has also been a poor record of compliance with the reporting obligation; in 2002, only 3% of states reported, and only three states have consis-

tently reported to every Review Conference since. He indicated that the NPT’s institutional deficit (having no Secretariat nor designated institutional support unit) has contributed to the low record of reporting and general accountability of states for their NPT compliance.

Paul Meyer, Simons Foundation, further expounded this argument. He began by describing the ways in which the NPT is bereft of important institutional mechanisms: the Treaty does not provide for an annual meeting of state parties and has no Executive Council, Secretariat, or permanent institutional persona, among other things. Such a “glaring” absence of NPT institutional support has negatively impacted on states’ proclivity for accountability vis-à-vis their disarmament obligations.

Mr. Meyer noted the “massive imbalance between the institutional support devoted to monitoring implementation of the non-proliferation obligations and that allocated to monitoring compliance with the dis-





armament obligations.” He noted that the IAEA has a staff of 2300 and a budget of over 320million euros for supporting implementation of the non-proliferation aspects of the NPT, as compared to no staff and no budget to support implementation of the disarmament provisions.

Like Mr. Jaramillio, Mr. Meyer also noted the “spotty” participation by NWS in the reporting requirement. However, he underlined that enhanced reporting could be achieved when NNWS demonstrate assertiveness in “pressing for substantive and sustained disclosure from the NWS.”

Improved reporting is but one means of buttressing the NPT accountability framework. Mr. Meyer also drew the audience’s attention to the need for an appropriate forum where information contained in the reports and other relevant factors could be examined. Unfortunately, the current lack of supporting institutions makes it difficult to have any forum of “accountability session” outside the quinquennial Review Conference. As such, Mr. Meyer advocated an annual meeting of states parties, without which it would remain challenging “to obtain attention for treaty compliance issues or

to mobilize the peer scrutiny of a state party’s actions.” Institutional reform, pursued in tandem with enhanced reporting, must be actively pursued, he concluded.

John Burroughs, Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy, spoke about the issue with regard to whether NPT disarmament commitments are considered legal or political. The poor record of implementation of these commitments since 1995, with many states shunting them aside, demonstrates that commitments are “political” ones “that may be subsequently rejected as circumstances dictate.” Nevertheless, some commitments (like those to verification and irreversibility) provide legal criteria for compliance with the NPT, which are being upheld to some degree in ways such as the New START. He also argued that couching NPT commitments in legal terms makes a difference when it comes to internal government deliberations, though even legal commitments can be ignored. Again, the overriding contention was that there exists a need to establish adequate institutional capabilities to monitor NPT compliance, which would reinforce accountability and counteract the tendency of states “to treat international law ... as manipulable for their own ends.” •

## SIDE EVENT: THE FUTURE OF SPACE SECURITY

Rohie Drammeh | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

On Thursday, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) hosted a side event together with the Secure World Foundation on the future of space security. The invited panel of speakers presented their views on the international situation on outer space, and the development of transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs).

Mr. Victor Vasiliev, the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on TCBMs in Outer Space Activities, was the first speaker of the event and briefed participants on the work and activities of the recent GGE in the area of outer space that met in July this year.

Mr. Bharath Gopalaswamy, the Associate Director at the Program in Arms Control, Disarmament and International Security at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, highlighted three main issues of outer space: the space environment, the legal and political aspects, and the technical aspects. He argued that the space environment is an unpredictable area under constant research, in which the same technologies are used to monitor other technologies (for example a satellite can be used to monitor another satellite), and believed that measures to keep negotiations on TCBMs on the way forward are needed.

Mr. Richard Bueneke, senior advisor for national security space policy in the Office of Missile Defense and Space Policy, Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance, at the United States Department of State

in Washington, D.C., argued that an important issue is the focus on guidelines for the GGE on TCBMs. He further believed that input of civil society is needed on the subject of outer space, both on a national and an international level.

Mr. Duncan Blake, Legal Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force, mentioned that Australia’s first ever space policy with an explicit reference to TCBMs is to be released soon. He argued that Australia is a global leader in astronomy and has an interest in outer space since it relies heavily upon modern technology. He identified the current challenges in the space domain today as strategic since outer space is “congested, contested, and competitive”. He believed that when the rules of interaction or norms of behaviour in the space domain are not well defined, the intent of a nation can be misunderstood which can lead to tense international situations. He believed that as more states are developing destructive capabilities in the space domain a significant measure for TCBMs would be to clarify international law. He argued that the law already exists, but it needs to be interpreted and applied in the context of outer space.

Dr. Joan Johnson-Freese, Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, believed that space is a place where nationality does not matter. She argued that the sustainability of the space environment is imperative to all nations be-

*continued on next page*

cause every nation is a user of space. Furthermore she emphasized that two global space-based utilities, the internet and GPS, are items that all nations in the world are more or less dependent upon. She concluded that the interest of maintaining these utilities is a common goal in the global community.

Mr. Ben Baseley-Walker, Programme Lead of the Emerging Security Threats Programme at UNIDIR, mentioned that space is no longer a super power game; it affects all members of the global community. States

monitor other states and their activities, but often states do not know *why* another state is acting the way it is. It is therefore prudent to develop more clearly-defined norms in the space domain in order to avoid misunderstandings of intent for the sake of the global community. There is also no doubt that TCBMs would be made easier with communication within the global community, as to further avoid the misunderstandings that threaten to occur. •

## SIDE EVENT: DEPLETED URANIUM

Aarushi Prakash | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

The International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) and IKV Pax Christi held a side event on 18 October to launch reports on the topic of depleted uranium (DU) weapons. DU is a by-product left over when natural uranium ore is enriched for use in nuclear reactors and nuclear weapons. It is a toxic, dense metal. If it is ingested or inhaled it creates risks both as a toxic heavy metal and as a radioactive material. DU munitions burn upon impact releasing uranium oxide dust which can be inhaled.

The first speaker of the evening was Wim Zwijnenburg from IKV Pax Christi, who introduced the report by Doug Weir, Coordinator of ICBUW, titled *Precaution in Practice: challenging the acceptability of depleted uranium weapons*. DU has been used twice in Iraq, in 1991 and 2003, and has reportedly resulted in an increase in cancer and congenital malformations. Zwijnenburg emphasized that it has been difficult to model risks as there is insufficient data provided on civilian exposure. Zwijnenburg stated that the US did not give data when asked by the Iraqi officials as to where DU was used. The report concludes that DU should be banned because today's war is not fought on frontlines but in civilian areas and because it poses health and environmental risks.

Zwijnenburg also discussed his own report, *Hazard Aware: Lessons learned from military field manuals on*

*depleted uranium and how to move forward for civilian protection norms*. The report indicates that the US has published some quantitative data on the use of DU, which amounts to at least 400,000 kilograms over both the 1991 and 2003 conflicts. Zwijnenburg pointed out the common field procedures in places where DU had been used and how the users were reluctant to take responsibility. Zwijnenburg also noted that lack of capacity and resources of the affected state heightened the already existing problem. Several countries have elaborated manuals on how to protect their troops—contrary to the statement that DU is not dangerous to civilians.

The last speakers of the evening were Katsumi Furitsu and Gretel Munroe of ICBUW Science Team, who presented their report on the “Genotoxicity of Depleted Uranium”. Katsumi defined genotoxicity as damaging the DNA and causing mutations or cancer. She then insinuated that DU weapons are carcinogenic in nature for humans in accordance with the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Katsumi Furitsu has observed over the years that due to specifics of the radiation, induction of chromosomes can be seen. In conclusion she added that DU is potentially carcinogenic and genotoxic. Gretel Munroe explained that exposure has been shown to lead to DNA double strands, which can lead to mutations. •

When	What	Where	Who
<b>Monday, 22 October</b> <b>18:00-20:00</b>	Breaking the nuclear chain: from victim to actor	Beekman Tower Hotel Ballroom	IKV Pax Christi; GPPAC; Peace Boat US
<b>Tuesday, 23 October</b> <b>13:15-14:45</b>	Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons: an imperative to act	Conference Room 7 North Lawn Building	Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the UN; International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
<b>Thursday, 25 October</b> <b>13:15-14:45</b>	Effective use of information to empower/influence disarmament and non-proliferation efforts	Conference Room A North Lawn Building	Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
<b>Saturday, 27 October</b> <b>15:30-17:00</b>	Outlawing nuclear weapons: time for a new treaty?	Fordham University Law School Room 302	American Branch, International Law Association

# SIDE EVENT: HIROSHIMA NAGASAKI DOWNLOAD: MEMORIES FROM THE AMERICAS

Rohie Drammeh | Reaching Critical Will of WILPF

Together with Hibakusha Stories, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) organized a side event, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations. Two survivors from the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki were present: Ms. Setsuko Thurlow, a survivor from Hiroshima, now living in Canada, and Mr. Yasuaki Yamashita, a survivor from Nagasaki, now living in Mexico. Mr. Clifton Truman Daniel, grandson of former US President Harry Truman—and the first member of the Truman family to visit the Hiroshima memorial site—was also present at the event.

Hibakusha Stories has the mission to pass the legacy of the US atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on to a new generation and to empower them with tools to build a world free of nuclear weapons. The Hibakusha, survivors of the atomic bombings, tell their stories in order to help people understand the reality of nuclear weapons. Many of them have dedicated their lives to peace and although they are growing old, they continue to work for nuclear disarmament and to give their testimonies in order for people to learn of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the grave impacts the bombings caused on the cities and their inhabitants.

The event started with a screening of a short clip from the film “Hiroshima-Nagasaki Download” by Shinpei Takeda. Mr. Takeda is an artist who has traveled to different countries and interviewed survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki who have left Japan. By deconstructing the stories he has heard, Mr. Takeda has created pieces of art that convey the stories and commemorates of the survivors. Although Mr. Takeda has listened to over 60 people’s interviews he has come to the realization that he does not understand the human and emotional implications—he just knows that the bombings took place and that they had horrible consequences. His art is an attempt to translate those experiences into visual representations that might reach other people.

Mr. Yasuaki Yamashita was six years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on the city of Nagasaki. When given the chance to speak Mr. Yamashita said that the world is in a critical situation because today, anywhere in the world and in any moment, history can be repeated. He argued, “war is not necessary for anyone, we do not need nuclear weapons anywhere. Nobody wins in a war.”

Ms. Setsuko Thurlow was 13 years old when the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. She said that she has vowed to never let another human-being experience the inhumanity, immorality, and cruelty that nuclear weapons cause. It is her mission is to share the

horror that nuclear weapons caused with the world and to tell the story of Hiroshima. As many of the survivors are today getting old and passing away it is imperative to tell the younger generation of what took place in the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Mr. Akira Kawasaki, Executive Member of Peace Boat, presented the Peace Boat Hibakusha Project. Peace Boat conducts global voyages around the world with Hibakusha onboard, who share their testimonies of the atomic bombings. The concept behind it is to learn from the past to help in the future. Mr. Kawasaki said that it is important for people to understand that nuclear weapons are a real problem that is not just a game between powerful nations. He also highlighted their Global Hibakusha project, which has brought together survivors from Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear testing in Tahiti, and uranium mining on aboriginal Australian lands.

Ms. Kathleen Sullivan, Director of Hibakusha Stories, mentioned some of the work that is in progress with the UNODA in relation to high schools in New York City. Hibakusha testimonies have been shared in high schools in the city, and now the next step is to educate high school teachers in New York on disarmament.

In closing, the question was raised about how to implement what we already know of the disastrous consequences caused by nuclear weapons in order to strive for a nuclear weapon free world. Mr. Yamashita said that it is not an easy task, noting that even though the Hibakusha keep giving their testimonies it sometimes feels like the people do not understand. But he believes that if at least one person understands their message, then that person can convey the message to another person, who will in turn keep sending the message forward by sharing it and thus expanding the wave of peace to the people. Ms. Thurlow added that the power of education is paramount, as it helps people to learn what happened, what it means, and where we are at now. In the words of Mr. Yamashita: “it is dangerous to forget history, it could happen again.” •



# FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

The *First Committee Monitor* is a collaborative NGO effort undertaken to make the work of the First Committee more transparent and accessible. The *Monitor* is compiled, edited, and coordinated by **Reaching Critical Will** of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

*Contributing organizations and programmes to this edition:*

NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

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