



News In Review

A collection of NGO views on the NPT PrepCom 2002

April 10, 2002 - No. 3



UN Office: 777 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017. phone (212) 682-1265 Fax: (212) 286-8211 E-mail: wilpfun@igc.org
Int Secretariat: 1, rue de Varembe, C.P.28, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland. Phone: (+41 22) 733-6175 E-mail: wilpf@iprolink.ch

NPT : NORMALLY PRETTY TEDIOUS

The statements from the second day of the NPT were characterized by much of the same rhetoric which has been echoed in the Conference on Disarmament and the General Assembly First Committee. The Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) did not all seem to be on the same page in the general debate. In contrast to the United States' statement the day before, that it "generally agrees with the conclusions of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and will contribute to their implementation", the Russian Federation stated that they "adhere to decisions of the 2000 conference and take specific steps to implement them". The day before, China only referred to the 13 steps in terms of negative progress, while yesterday France stated that they supported and encouraged the implementation of these measures. Many NGOs are wondering exactly how "unequivocal" the undertaking really is to abolish nuclear weapons by the NWS. All of the nuclear weapon states listed ways in which they have "taken this [article VI] obligation seriously". However, that song has been sung since 1970, and many NGOs feel that it's time for the band to come home.

Not surprisingly, US, UK and France all took the opportunity to chastise Iraq and North Korea's non-compliance to the NPT, while China and Russia tended to focus more on their concern for the United States' lack of commitment to maintain the integrity of multilateral arms control.

NGOs have been listening closely to the statements of the nuclear weapons states for possible areas of progress. All five mentioned the importance of strengthening IAEA safeguards system. Strong support for the additional protocols was expressed, with the UK stating that "it should be an obligation for NPT parties to bring Additional Protocols into force".

This support for the additional protocols was also expressed by several of the Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS), such as Egypt. In addition, a frequent call for an increase in funding of the IAEA was heard on several occasions.

The term "legally binding" threaded through the statements of the Non-Nuclear Weapon States. Canada mentioned it in terms of "its conviction that global security prospects are best served by legally binding multilateralism", while Mexico stated that "the NWS should also assume a legally binding commitment on non-first use of such weapons".

NGOs have been listening hard for the nuances and new ideas contained in the speeches, but for the most part, the statements are fairly predictable. Concerns, set-backs and lack of movement at all in many areas was the tone expressed again yesterday, as it was the day before. One area of potential is the concept of regular reporting. It is the hope of many NGOs that this concept will develop into a concrete, standardized and an institutionalized part of the NPT, to bring much needed accountability and transparency to the NPT process, and to the non-proliferation regime more generally.

NGO presentations to the NPT today will provide a unique analysis of the issues from the perspective of civil society, and it is hoped that the NPT delegates will listen closely and participate in the roundtable from 1pm-2:30pm in Conference Room D for a session of dialogue and exchange of views on essential elements to strengthening the NPT.

Emily Schroeder

Reaching Critical Will, WILPF

**Please Come to our Reception
Tonight, 777 UN Plaza, 12th Floor, 6pm!**

News In Review is funded by Ploughshares Fund, The Ford Foundation & others

All articles contained in News In Review are the sole responsibility of the author or organisation submitting the pieces. The opinions herein are not necessarily those of the Editors, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) or the Reaching Critical Will project.

Who's Who - NGO Profile

Senator Douglas Roche

Middle Powers Initiative

1. What are your hopes or expectations for the 2002 Nuclear Non-Proliferation 2002?

I hope that the 2002 NPT Prepcom will end in a way that shows the international community is united in its determination to uphold the "unequivocal undertaking" to negotiate the elimination of nuclear weapons made in 2000. The Nuclear Weapons States must receive a message that the good of the NPT does not permit any backsliding from commitments to implement all thirteen steps agreed to in 2000. Reporting standards must be established.

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

The solid work of the New Agenda Countries in steering a course to obtain that which is possible at this time is the most interesting aspect of the Prepcom. The leadership of the New Agenda can indeed save the NPT. The Middle Powers Initiative will work hard to uphold New Agenda values.

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

My work in development issues over many years led me to the conclusion that the elimination of nuclear weapons is a precondition for peace and sustainable development in the twenty-first century. Now that I have grandchildren, I am motivated all the more to leave them a world that will not be destroyed by weapons of mass destruction.

US in the Line of fire at UN Disarmament Conference

AFP, Beijing

The United States faced condemnation Tuesday for growing unilateralism in arms control issues at the first UN-sponsored disarmament conference since Washington named potential nuclear targets in a leaked defence review.

Some participants criticised Washington directly for ploughing ahead with its own diplomacy since the September 11 terrorist attacks, while others lamented a general global trend away from collective security.

"The calamitous events of September 11 should only serve to redouble our efforts, not to divert them," UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs Jayantha Dhanapala said in his opening address.

"(But) our collective efforts (at arms control and disarmament) are hindered by the rise of unilateral actions... that jeopardise common efforts," he said, without specifying any guilty parties.

The three-day international conference, entitled "A Disarmament Agenda for the 21st Century", is jointly sponsored by the Chinese government and gathers around 40 arms control experts from 20 countries and regions.

Besides nuclear disarmament, participants will also discuss defence doctrines, disarmament and the UN, a potential space arms race, missile proliferation and missile defence and conventional weapons.

The United States has faced recent international pressure over a series of moves such as its decision to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) and a veto of a biological weapons treaty late last year.

<http://www.dailystarnews.com/200204/03/n2040313.htm#BODY7>



Quote of the Day

Ambassador Westdal, of Canada:

The NPT's inherent discrimination is acceptable only in a larger context of coherent commitment and credible progress toward disarmament. Without Article VI, the NPT would not exist. Without its fulfilment over time, the Treaty - in which non-proliferation and disarmament are mutually interdependent- will lose its seminal value.

Growing Opposition in Greenland Against US Missile Defense Scheme

Growing Opposition in Greenland Against US Missile Defense Scheme

Located close to the North Pole, the Thule Air Force Base in North-West Greenland is poised to play a key role in the proposed US missile defense system. The US administration plans to upgrade the existing early warning radar at Thule and build a new, more accurate, x-band radar at the site. These radars would detect and track incoming enemy missiles and all require upgrading to enhance their tracking capability and enable them to provide better data so intercept points can be calculated and incoming missiles destroyed – at least that is the theory.

The Bush administration needs consent to move ahead with its plans from the Danish government, which administers the foreign and defense policies of Greenland. The issue of upgrading the early warning radar at Thule (Pituffik in Greenlandic) is one of the most important foreign policy issues in Greenland and Denmark for many years. So far the Danish government has declined to make any decision on the issue until the US formally requests upgrading of the Thule radar. The UK government has adopted a similar policy regarding planned upgrades to radar and tracking facilities at US bases in Fylingdales and Menwith Hill in the UK.

Meanwhile, opposition against using Thule in the missile defense system is growing in Greenland according to a new opinion poll published last week by Greenpeace. Many Greenlanders feel ignored and disenfranchised on security matters, and this is particularly so among the indigenous Inughuit communities North of the huge base area. The Inughuits (polar eskimos) were illegally forced to move away from their ancient hunting grounds by the Danish state when the US base was expanded in 1953. Greenpeace visited Thule on a month long boat tour along the West coast of Greenland last Summer, collecting video testimonies from concerned Greenlanders, who fear their peaceful island will become an obvious bomb target if the upgrade is allowed.

GREENPEACE INTERNATIONAL

A Taste of Today's NGO Presentations

We, as NGOS, have a duty to put forward a more positive alternative to global problems. The current spiral of violence is advanced as the reason why disarmament must be abandoned, and yet more sophisticated weapons pursued. But it is precisely this climate of increasingly unrestrained violence that makes the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction more urgent than ever. **(Political Overview, Presentation #1)**

Regardless of whatever hypothetical scenarios of retaliatory nuclear use with limited "collateral damage" can be conjured up, in general making nuclear weapons more usable as a matter of policy and operation risks unleashing nuclear chaos in the world that among other unacceptable consequences could result in nuclear explosions on the soil of the country executing the nuclear use. **(Rule of Law, the NPT, and Global Security, Presentation #2)**

The format for NPT reporting should be standardised for all States parties and would need to be worked out by those States willing to take a lead. There are several international reporting models already in existence but the criteria must be that it is simple, clear and easy to use.

It could be broken down into topics related to each of the Treaty articles and into time periods, providing a backwards-looking component and a forwards-looking component, projecting planned future developments.

However the most important consideration is in getting the process effectively underway with flexibility to add subsequent items from future Review Conferences. **(Reporting by States Parties to the NPT, Presentation #10)**

In the NGO community, women's organisations have focused a great deal of energy on macro-security questions, especially on weapons of mass destruction since they were invented. The women's peace movement has looked at the hardware of war to see what role they play in the culture and psychology of fighting; in the economics of business, buyer as well as seller; they have examined the sexual symbolism and significance of weapons as well as the part they play as a mechanism for the distribution of power and favours by elites. Women's organisations following the NPT submit that the ability of military security to achieve its stated aims is routinely over-estimated, while the complexity of its costs is overlooked. They also submit that the absence of women in the security sector helps to explain the lack of human security in today's war-ravaged, weaponized, insecure world that is polluted with dangerous weapons, ideologies and institutions, created mainly by men with a handful of women. **(NGO Recommendations to the 2002 NPT PrepCom)**

What's On: WEEK ONE

Daily: Abolition 2000 Morning Caucus, 8am to 9am, Monday-Friday, Episcopal Center, 815 2nd Ave and 43rd St.

Wednesday, April 10th, 2002

- * NGO Presentations: 10:00 am - 1:00 pm, Conference Room 4, Official NPT Session
- * NPT Online Tutorial Information Session & Demo , following the round-table discussion in Conference Room D, Center for Non-Proliferation Studies in cooperation with the Nuclear Threat Initiative.
- * **NGO-Delegate Reception - 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm 777 UN Plaza, 12nd Floor-- ALL INVITED!!!!**

Thursday, April 11th, 2002

- * **Dialogue between the activist, academic and UN Officials on Women, Peace and Security, Disarmament and the ICC**, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

9:30am -5pm, UN Conference Room 2

- * "The Shape of Things to Come: The Nuclear Posture Review, Missile Defense, and the Dangers of a New Arms Race", Briefing for Delegates, NGOs and the Press. Facilitated by INESAP. 1pm-3pm, UN Conference Room 4.

Friday, April 12th, 2002

- * "Nuclear Non-Proliferation in South Asia: The Need for New Approaches" Panel. 1:15-2:45pm, UN Conference Room 4. Facilitated by Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW)
- * "The Shape of Things to Come: The Nuclear Posture Review, Missile Defense, and the Dangers of a New Arms Race", Panel Presentations by several NGOs. 9:30am-12:45pm; 3:30-6pm, 777 UN Plaza, 12th Floor.

Please check venue and times against daily schedule as these may change

Soundbite

"There is no such thing as "minimum level" of nuclear weapons necessary for "national security". There *is* no minimum level. the two are mutually exclusive! The only thing nuclear weapons are good for is "national self-image".

- Sharon Riggle, Centre for European Security and Disarmament (CESD)

NEXT I WILL NAME
THE COUNTRIES COMPRISING THE
AXIS - OF - TWO - FACED - SPINELESS -
WEASELS - WHO - DARE - TO -
QUESTION - THE - N.A.T.O. -
NUCLEAR - POLICY

B. Rauson's © 2002
freedomspice@earthlink.net

