



Abolition 2000 UK

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To achieve for the new century a global treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons

June 2009 NEWSLETTER

Blackaby Papers

The seventh (2007) Blackaby paper on 'The Hidden Human Cost of Trident', authored by Di McDonald and Jamie Woolley (NIS in Southampton), is available in hard copy from the office or on line as a pdf file from our web site (above).

We now have funding for a eighth Blackaby. **Rebecca Johnson** will author: **'Nuclear Abolition: An idea whose time has come'**. A year away from the 2010 Review Conference of NPT states parties and there is a new President in the White House. But there are deep challenges that raise questions about the relevance of the NPT and the sustainability of a non-proliferation regime unless the abolition of nuclear weapons is firmly on the agenda.

The Chair's summary from the 2008 PrepCom identified the CTBT, deeper cuts in nuclear arsenals, an FMCT, restricting proliferation sensitive nuclear fuel, and many other elements that need to be worked on to make 2010 a success within NPT terms, but is that going to be enough? Even if NPT parties are able to agree on these issues in 2010 - a big "if" - credibility will be lost if they are not implemented; and implementation will only come about through actions undertaken in national capacities.

To strengthen nonproliferation and security we have to confront the high value still attached to nuclear weapons by the current possessors and future proliferators. When looking constructively at what needs to be achieved at the 2010 Review Conference, civil society and states must look beyond 2010 and consider how best to create and use political opportunities to fulfil our security needs, which should be at the core of strengthening the NPT, even if to do so, we need to go beyond the NPT's current institutions and remit.

The NPT PrepCom (New York, 2009)

Two reports

Back from New York – from Dominique Lalanne (Chair Abolition 2000-Europe)

This was an amazing PrepCom for those like me, used to seeing nothing happening in such an assembly. From May 4th to 15th there was a positive atmosphere in all delegations, except the French - an "Obama effect".

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is back on tracks with its goal of nuclear disarmament. The big change was due to US President Obama's 5 April speech in Prague. On the first day of the PrepCom the US delegate's intervention mentioned many key issues from this speech. And the "special message" from Obama to the conference was: "to seek the peace and security of a world free of nuclear weapons; in Prague, I committed the United States to take a number of initial steps in this direction". And a reminder from the Prague speech was: "We will seek a new agreement by the end of the year that is legally binding and sufficiently bold... This will set the stage for further cuts, and we will seek to include all nuclear weapon states in this endeavour".

Of course it was always emphasised by official delegations that the "three pillars" of the Treaty - non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy - have to be kept in mind, but the great news was from the US: "our delegation reaffirms the importance of decisions taken in 1995 and 2000, including the one on the Middle East". That opened the possibility for the chairman of the Conference, Ambassador Chidyausiku of Zimbabwe, to propose an agenda for the 2010 Review Conference on the third day of the PrepCom – an event never previously seen since the Treaty's entry into force!

Only one state disagreed with the proposed agenda at its first presentation: France. This was because it was specified that it will include "decisions taken in 2000 and recent developments". "Recent developments" was not acceptable to France, because its new missile M51, built since 2000 and tested recently, is totally new with a much greater range and able to hit Beijing, whereas the current M45 can only reach Moscow. Impossible to accept a discussion of the new French missile... And very diplomatically, Ambassador Chidyausiku removed these two words. And a consensus became possible.

Real discussions began on "recommendations" proposed by Ambassador Chidyausiku. Almost all States agreed upon this list, which was enthusiastically supported by NGOs. It included the study of a Convention, to include all States, even non-member States of the

NPT. But that was too much. The US delegation was reluctant to set a list so precise when a new US nuclear posture policy is under study and foreseen to be published by the end of the year.

Despite this impasse, this PrepCom shows real hope for the 2010 Review Conference. We must in the meanwhile succeed in making the idea of a Convention acceptable, in order to include all nuclear States, non-members as well as members of the NPT. We have one year to convince public opinion, the media and politicians. Not much time. But it is the only way to a world free of nuclear weapons.

A UK NGO perspective – from Patricia Pulham (Christian CND)

It was raining on both first and second days for the vigil at the Isaiah Wall opposite the UN building.

At the UN NGOs had to sit in the Balcony area - a bit dull but the simultaneous translation microphones worked well. The first day's CND presentation on how Barack Obama has changed things (or not) was a good and lively meeting. The second day had a focus on Europe.

The Kenyan CCND group, who were to have hosted a presentation "The Cry of Creation", failed to arrive - visa problems. On the third day the weather improved and the Agenda for the 2010 Review Conference was almost fixed (in 2005 the RevCon almost collapsed because of difficulties in fixing an agenda).

A Nuclear Weapons Convention discussion was led by the Mouvement de la Paix. The official US presentation on Article VI was cancelled (still finalising their team?). We met with the Irish delegation - they have a high regard for CCND and how well we are organised. The whole mood of the PrepCom was upbeat.

On Thursday the morning government briefing was from the UK's John Duncan - part of a positive and optimistic session now that an agenda has been adopted by all the States - largely based on the one set in 2000. It was the 10th birthday of Reaching Critical Will, the WILPF project.

We had particularly warm contacts with representatives from Japan, France, Canada, Italy and Norway. On Friday (our last day) the sun was shining! An official UK/Norway presentation on verification described the role playing exercise between Torland (Norway) and Luvania (UK), in which Luvania played a non-NWS and Torland an NWS (reversing their real world positions). This involved full nuclear facilities, reactors, and storage facilities, but the mock-up weapons were loaded with Co60 rather than Uranium or Plutonium. I had a useful conversation with John Noble (MOD) afterwards and also met the leader of the Norwegian delegation.

A session on Disarmament and non-proliferation education showed that few people

worldwide had hands-on experience of schools work, something peace organisations in UK do rather well.

Michael Pulham adds: Probably the idea of pushing for a NW Convention had been seen earlier as a way of overcoming the doldrums the NPT had entered. Now, however, Obama has re-invigorated things and those pushing for NWC might have to think carefully so as not to distract from what might be an efficient process (Of course, a NWC remains the ultimate end game.)

French NGO's reported great surprise when they heard from their government's delegation that France would not want anything multilateral! (see Dominique Lalanne's comments). The Russian Federation may not be too keen on revisiting the 13 steps. Many think it is vital that everything be done now to support Obama. It's a moment that can easily slip by. He needs us to seize the moment.

After the PrepCom – an Abolition2000 initiative

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A new global initiative of Abolition 2000 - the "Abolition Flame Campaign" was launched May 9 at the 2009 Annual General Meeting in New York. Inspired in part by "the 'Hiroshima Flame' kindled 57 years ago from embers of the U.S. atomic bombing of Japan, the Abolition Flame can only be spread by you. This 'flame' is meant to be a symbol. Whether someone is carrying a lit flame as part of the World March or organizing their own event to raise awareness about nuclear abolition, they are part of spreading the Nuclear Abolition Flame.

The site <http://www.abolitionflame.org> allows anyone to blog with the coordinators, telling them about events worldwide in support of abolishing nuclear weapons. To help spread the flame it is hoped to send 25,000 letters (one for every nuclear weapon) to US President Barack Obama and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev urging them to abolish nuclear weapons. Please let the coordinators know if a letter is sent. And information about any event held to support the abolition of nuclear weapons can be posted on [abolitionflame.org](http://www.abolitionflame.org).

(Abolition 2000 Coordinating Committee)

Speaking truth to power

We made a written submission on 29/September/2008 to the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs Inquiry on Global Security and Non-proliferation referring to: 'National Security Strategy' Cabinet Office paper Cm. 7291, March 2008. We found the general style and approach of Cm. 7291 rather simplistic. It conflated a number of very different security issues, including nuclear weapons, other WMD, terrorism, global warming, threats of pandemics, flooding, and economic problems. It also treated as similar or analogous

some different geopolitical problem areas, most obviously Iraq and Afghanistan, and did not distinguish clearly the roles of different alliances of which UK is a member, especially NATO and the EU.

We noted that available treaties and potential treaties are only a partial step in the direction of nuclear weapons abolition. We urged that government acknowledge the eventual need for an over-arching treaty or convention that would ban the possession, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in the same way that the Chemical Weapons and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Conventions ban those WMD.

We pointed out that nuclear non-proliferation is inevitably linked with nuclear disarmament and spoke of the contrast between the continuance of UK NW (Cm. 7291 and the governmental Trident white paper), and official support for disarmament initiatives. We pointed out that deterrence theory, both nuclear and non-nuclear, is intrinsically problematic, but that deterrence of any kind is unlikely to work against non-state actors. We emphasized the possibility of various disarmament actions that fall short of complete nuclear disarmament but which can represent gradual steps toward a world without nuclear weapons. The security of the UK is linked with the need for progress in nuclear disarmament.

The full letter of submission is available from the office or from the chair Peter Nicholls (pnicholl@essex.ac.uk) and may be available on the select committee's web site.

ICAN and the campaign for a Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC).

We are collaborating with Medact-based ICAN, the international campaign for a nuclear weapons convention (NWC). Copies of the second edition of the model NWC, with commentary and a foreword by Judge C. G. Weeramantry, "Securing our Survival" are available for purchase from our office or can be downloaded from the web site at <<http://www.icanw.org>>. Copies of a summary leaflet for general distribution can also be acquired from the office.

A major problem is persuading governments (including some other sympathetic ones and not just NWS) that a NWC does not in some way 'undermine' the NPT and associated treaties. Undoubtedly a number of current international treaties delimit the possible use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, the partial and the comprehensive test ban treaties (CTBT, not yet in force but currently obeyed 'de facto' under moratoria agreed by all the NWS), the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty (INF), the several nuclear weapons-free zones, and the NPT.

Some parts of the NPT have the character required for a genuine NWC, especially articles I and II concerning transfer and receipt of NW

material and information. But the only part of the NPT referring to nuclear disarmament is Article VI : "Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control." which contains no mechanism for initiating such negotiations nor specifies any forum to be used. The quinquennial NPT Review Conferences discuss progress with respect to the 'three pillars' (nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful use of nuclear energy) and could in theory amend the treaty (under article X) but this has never been attempted. No current mechanism is in place for automatic acknowledgment and NWS acceptance of Nuclear Weapons-Free Zones (NWFZ). No mechanism exists for making the negative security assurances (NSAs) of NWS, which already exist in draft form, legally binding. No mechanism is available even in draft form for ensuring or developing the prohibition and disuse of the policy of nuclear deterrence (which remains part of NATO and Russian military theory). Any discussion of a NWC, or parts of such a convention, must therefore almost certainly take place outside the NPT process.

Two basic international mechanisms exist, both for treaty/convention adoption, and for treaty enforcement and verification, the permanent and semi-autonomous Conference on Disarmament (CD), and the international conference called under the direct auspices of the UN. The former has failed to promote any new proposals since 1998. The UN General Assembly has called upon the CD to set up four subsidiary bodies, to deal with fissile material and a possible cut-off treaty (FMCT), to consider prevention of an arms race in space (PAROS), to formalise the negative security assurances by the NWS to the NNWS (NSAs), and to discuss nuclear disarmament itself (ND). Due to its procedures being governed by 'consensus' the CD has been unable even to set up such subsidiary bodies for the past several years, although this year there is again some optimism. CD membership includes only about one third of the united nations. The second mechanism for negotiating an international treaty is a conference authorised by the UN independent of the CD – the Kyoto (climate change) or Ottawa (anti-personnel land mines) process. Such a process would require near unanimity on the part of UNGA, and in the case of the proposed NWC, agreement by more than one NWS. Current UNGA resolutions on a NWC do not provide a sufficient consensus for such a conference procedure.

The CTBT, even though not yet in full force, has a permanent body (the CTBTO) to monitor possible weapons testing. The CWC has a

permanent agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), engaged in arranging the destruction of CW. There is no equivalent NPT body. The IAEA plays an incomplete role, monitoring nuclear installations in NNWS but not in NWS, and charged with ambiguous duties – preventing NW development but supporting nuclear energy. NPT meetings alone, including the PrepComs and Review Conferences, cannot provide the forum needed to discuss a NWC. The inclusion of specific NWC discussions in the CD or UNGA would not jeopardise the more limited role of the NPT meetings in avoiding proliferation, establishing procedures for nuclear energy sharing, and monitoring disarmament steps by the recognised NWS.

Good news and bad

From: www.defencemanagement.com (March thru May, 2009) for items 1-4 and general press accounts (item 5).

1. Speaking to an international conference of government ministers and scientists on March 19, Gordon Brown called for the UK to take the lead at the 2010 NPT RevCon. He indicated we have to transform the discussion of nuclear disarmament from platitudes to hard commitments. If it is possible to reduce the number of UK warheads, Britain will be ready to do so, he said, calling for a conference next year in which at least the five recognised nuclear armed countries would discuss reductions to their arsenals.

2. On May 12 initial design costs of the Trident replacement programme were revealed to have risen by £100m (including a £50m contract to US General Dynamics Electric Boat corporation) after measures had to be taken to ensure that proposed submarines can accommodate new US missiles. The US Navy apparently plans for a missile 120 inches in diameter (the current diameter for the Trident missiles is 87 inches). Previously UK plans had assumed that the missiles would continue to be 87 inches. The new US missile programme is expected to be completed five years after the V-class replacement submarines are brought into service. Fears were that the Royal Navy could be stuck with missiles that do not fit. This information came just after Defence Secretary John Hutton admitted that the cost of the design programme had risen from £300m to £400m for this year alone. It is unclear where the additional £50m is being spent.

3. Britain's Vanguard replacement programme faces a strict timeline for completion or else the country could be left without a nuclear deterrent for some years according to a March report by the Public Accounts Committee. The 2024 'out of service' date for the current Vanguards puts the

replacement programme on an extremely tight deadline, as all of the new boats will have to be in service by then (though some technical experts have argued that the old boats could last until 2034). Since the UK is replacing its submarines before the USA, conflicts could also arise over the design of certain components and missiles (see item 2). Future US spare parts may not be compatible with British submarines.

4. The Trident replacement programme could face the axe under a Conservative government, David Cameron has hinted (May 1 2009). He told a press conference that the programme could be scrapped or a cheaper alternative such as land based cruise missiles ordered. Government debt is rising rapidly and the need for cuts in public service budgets will have to come sooner than later. Shadow Chancellor George Osborne and former shadow Home Secretary David Davis have refused to offer protection for the Trident programme should the need for massive defence cuts come about. Cameron is being non-committal after supporting the renewal programme two years ago.

5. Early on May 25 North Korea conducted a subterranean nuclear test some 80 km north-west of the city of Kilchu. The international talks to halt the DPRK's NW programme, involving Russia, China, the US, Japan and South Korea, are presently stalled. But there need to be carrots as well as sticks. The status of the US heavy oil supplies, for example, that were promised and then unpromised is currently unclear. We still do not know the yield of this test. The Russian Defence Ministry initially said 10-20KT and so in the Hiroshima-Nagasaki range. It is now being recalculated by some experts as much lower, in the 4 kT range, indicating yet another only partial success if indeed it was a plutonium compression device. There should be a CTBTO report at some stage. A negative development in the context of the successful NPT PrepCom and Obama's willingness to think about NW, this test can only serve to harden further the position of hardliners in all NWS. Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates warned North Korea on May 30 that the United States would not accept it as a nuclear weapons state. The North says it will no longer honour the 1953 Korean armistice if Seoul joins in threatened sanctions involving action against shipping nuclear materials to and from the DPRK. The U.N. Security Council is again drafting financial and military penalties against North Korea. Similar penalties after the North's 2006 atomic test have been only sporadically enforced.

6. After 12 years of stalemate, on May 29 2009 the Conference on Disarmament (CD) adopted by consensus document CD/1863, which contains a programme of work for the 2009 session. The C D will establish four Working Groups:

(i) on cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament, to exchange views and information on practical steps for progressive and systematic efforts to reduce nuclear weapons with the ultimate goal of their elimination, including approaches toward potential future work of a multilateral character;

(ii) to negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299 of 24 March 1995 and the mandate therein (also known as the Shannon Mandate);

(iii) on prevention of an arms race in outer space; and,

(iv) on negative security assurances.

The Conference will also appoint Special Coordinators on other agenda items, including new weapons of mass destruction and related weapon systems; radiological weapons; a comprehensive programme of disarmament; and transparency in armaments. The CD's next plenary sessions will begin on Thursday, 4 June 2009. (see [Reachingcriticalwill](http://Reachingcriticalwill.org) E-Newsletter at e-news@reachingcriticalwill.org).

Forthcoming event The Citizen and the law of armed conflict

A two-Day Conference Tuesday 1 September– Wednesday 2 September at Friends Meeting House, Euston Rd., London. The Institute for Law Accountability and Peace (INLAP) and World Court Project UK have initiated a process concerned with accountability and the law. This free conference is a first step.

Conference day 1 will address the problems which have arisen over the last few years while also recognising signs of hope for the future. Day 2 will develop a structure for taking our concerns forward.

Participants will be encouraged to study a prior information package including material on the main elements of international law relating to armed conflict.

For more information contact: George Farebrother at geowcpuk@gn.apc.org or phone 01 323 844 269.

Funding

Abolition 2000 UK needs to be continuously funded at a modest level and depends upon supporting organisations and individuals for

donations and annual subscriptions to maintain this.

We are currently ourselves organising another (ninth) Blackaby paper, a probable visit to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office this autumn, a presence at next year's NPT review Conference in New York, and sometime in between a meeting with some disarmament missions in Geneva. We also support several activities in common with other peace and anti-nuclear organisations, currently including promoting the model Nuclear Weapons Convention with ICAN, and being represented in the NO Trident Replacement Core Group and with the WMD Awareness project.

Please consider renewing your support for 2009-10 to help keep our momentum going towards the critical NPT Review Conference (RevCon), scheduled for New York at the end of April 2010.

Standing orders, however modest, are convenient for both donor and recipient. Please contact Claire at mail@abolition2000uk.org for more information.

Next A2000 UK Meeting 16 July 2009

The next Abolition 2000 UK meeting will be on Thursday 16 July in Housman's meeting room, 5 Caledonian Rd., London N1 9DY. 1.30 - 3.30 pm. Agenda to follow.

Important

Please note our current email address: mail@abolition2000uk.org and our web address: www.abolition2000uk.org. The host system (www.netuxo.com) is run by peace movement activists as a co-operative.

Abolition 2000 UK

Newsletter produced by Claire Poyner. Opinions printed in this newsletter are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of Abolition 2000 UK, unless otherwise stated.