

PUGWASH CONFERENCES ON SCIENCE AND WORLD AFFAIRS

Update 2009.1

Activities - 1 January - 25 May 2009

We are launching a new series of quarterly updates to better inform the Pugwash network of the ongoing work of the Pugwash secretariat and national groups. These updates are not designed to be comprehensive, but rather to provide a general overview. We hope you will find them of interest. As this is the first of these updates, it includes a broader overview of recent activities. Please note there have been some meetings/consultations of a sensitive nature that are not mentioned here.

These updates are prepared at the request of Pugwash Secretary General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino by Sandra Ionno Butcher, London Pugwash Office.

== 1.0 - OVERVIEW ==

Pugwash has focused efforts to facilitate high-level dialogue in areas of conflict where nuclear weapons are either present or proliferation risks are high. In addition to the following specific activities, members of the executive committee continue to hold private discussions with decision makers in several countries on these issues.

== 2.0 THE HAGUE ==

2.1 - Pugwash International Conference, The Hague, 17-20 April 2009. Nearly 200 senior statesmen, scientists, leaders of international organizations and policy experts from around the world gathered in The Hague for the 58th Pugwash International Conference on Science and World Affairs.

This conference featured a special day-long symposium on "Next Steps in Nuclear Disarmament." Chaired by Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala, it featured leading world experts. Conference plenaries and working groups

explored: Nuclear Disarmament, Nonproliferation and the 2010 NPT Review Conference; Prospects for Security, Justice and Peace in the Middle East; Regional Stability in Central and South Asia: the situation in Afghanistan, and Indo-Pakistani relations; Preventing the Deterioration of Human Rights Standards: policies and practices; and Climate Change, Energy Resources and

Technology Sharing. Speakers included: Amb. Hans Blix, former D.G. IAEA, President WMD Commission; Amb. Sergio Duarte, UN High Representative on Disarmament; Justice Richard Goldstone, Previous Chief Prosecutor of the United Nations International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda; Mr. Luis Moreno-Ocampo, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court; Amb. Rogelio Pfirter, Director General of the OPCW, Dr Jennifer Allan Simons (Canada), in addition to many current and former diplomats including Hon. Shukria Barakzai; Amb. Grigory Berdennikov (Russia); Amb. Hu Xiaodi (China); former Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers; former Secretary of Defense William Perry (US); Amb. Robin Raphel (US); former Foreign Secretary Sir Malcolm

Rifkind (UK). The Dorothy Hodgkin Lecture was given by Hon. Sherry Rehman, Former Federal Information Minister, Pakistan. Please see the website for a full listing of the many eminent and insightful speakers.

The Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, sent a statement to the Conference, in which he wrote, "Pugwash's ongoing efforts to promote scientific contributions to humanity are invaluable. I especially appreciate your longstanding efforts to warn the world against the catastrophic threat posed to humanity by nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. Pugwash's work for progress in nuclear disarmament has even greater resonance today, as more and more people recognize the hazards of nuclear weapons and their irrelevance in addressing contemporary security challenges, such as terrorism and intra-state warfare. ... I congratulate Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala and the organizers for the Nuclear Weapons Symposium that is part of this year's conference. Your members have a uniquely authoritative and passionate stance, and their contributions will no doubt help advance our work in this area... The Pugwash Conference has a critical role to play in meeting these challenges..." The full statement is available here:

http://www.pugwash.nl/index.php?option=com_vfm&Itemid=19&do=view&file=conference2009|Statement+Ban+Ki-Moon.pdf

The entire Pugwash community gives a special thanks to The Netherlands Pugwash group for their excellent work in organizing this meeting, and to all the funders who made it possible.

<http://www.pugwash.nl/index.php>

The Council statement is available online at:

<http://www.pugwash.org/reports/pic/58/council-statement.htm>

Working group reports will soon be available at: www.pugwash.org

2.2 - International Student/Young Pugwash held a very successful conference, "Back to the Future: Core Dimensions of Nuclear Power and Nuclear Weapons," 15-16 April 2009, The Hague.

http://www.pugwash.nl/index.php?option=com_content&task=blogcategory&id=48&Itemid=62

2.3 - In the news: Nature mentioned Pugwash in an editorial, 2 April 2009:

"[S]cientists and engineers can play a crucial part by redoubling their efforts to create informal scientific and diplomatic backchannels. Particularly notable in that context is a conference taking place on 17-20 April in the Hague: the 58th annual meeting of the international Pugwash movement.... The movement's frequent convocations of influential scientists, politicians and other figures are credited with making key progress in arms control during the cold war. And although today's geopolitics are very different, the movement's efforts are as relevant as ever."

http://www.pugwash.org/reports/nw/nature/nature_editorial.htm

== 3.0 - NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT ==

3.1 - In the news: Jayantha Dhanapala, "Remove, don't reset, the nuclear button," 1 April 2009, Asahi Shimbun, <http://www.asahi.com/english/Herald-asahi/TKY200904010050.html>

3.2 - European Parliament. The National Film Board of Canada held a screening of The Strangest Dream at the European Parliament on 1 April 2009.

3.3 - Pugwash Executive Director Jeffrey Boutwell participated in a workshop, Technical Approaches to Support Nuclear Arms Control and Nonproliferation, organized by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Sandia National Laboratory, held 8-9 April.

3.4 - Helsinki, Finland. On 24 April, Jayantha Dhanapala spoke about "Diplomatic Pathways Toward a Nuclear Weapons Convention" at the IPPNW Joint European-Russian/CIS Symposium. The video of this talk is available online: <http://www.videonet.fi/ippnw/20090424/12/index.html>

3.5 - Washington, DC. Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala, Secretary General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, and Executive Director Jeffrey Boutwell visited policymakers in Washington, DC, 27-29 April 2009, including a meeting with the new US presidential science advisor, John Holdren, 29 April, Assistant Secretary of State and lead negotiator for the upcoming START talks, Rose Gottemoeller on 30 April, Jon Wolfsthal in the office of Vice-President Joseph Biden, 27 April. Photos available: http://www.pugwash.org/reports/nw/dc-visit-april2009/policymakers_photos_april_2009.htm

3.6 - Stimson Center. Seminar with Paolo Cotta-Ramusino and Jayantha Dhanapala, moderated by Stimson President Ellen Laipson, 28 April 2009.

3.7 - United Nations. From 4-8 May 2009, Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala, Secretary General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, and Executive Director Jeffrey Boutwell were present in New York for the NPT PrepCom. On 5 May The Strangest Dream was shown in Committee Room 1, co-hosted by Amb. Sergio Duarte. Jayantha took part in the "Voices of Experience" panel discussion, co-sponsored by the Global Security Institute, Pugwash Conferences, and the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs on 7 May. Jayantha also spoke in other meetings about energy and the Nuclear Weapons Convention. Pictures available: http://www.pugwash.org/reports/nw/NPT-Review-Conference-May-2009/pugwash_in_New_York.htm.

3.8 - Washington, DC. During the week of 11-15 May 2009, Paolo Cotta-Ramusino and Jeffrey Boutwell met with Gary Samore, Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Counterproliferation Strategy, Puneet Talwar, senior director on Iran, Iraq, and Gulf states, and Robert Einhorn, Special Advisor on Non-Proliferation, among others.

== 4.0 - SOUTH ASIA ==

4.1 - Islamabad, Pakistan. The Pugwash meeting on the 'Prospects for Restarting the India-Pakistan Dialogue' was held at the Marriott Hotel, Islamabad, Pakistan on 5-6 March 2009. Thirty-one participants attended the meeting. The participants included leaders of major political parties in Indian and Pakistani Kashmir, retired government servants, diplomats, academics, analysts, and prominent civil society actors from India and Pakistan. While the meeting was held specifically to address the emerging bilateral relationship after the Mumbai and Lahore terror strikes, it was part of the larger Pugwash track-II dialogue initiative in the region which was kicked off in 2002.

== 5.0 - MIDDLE EAST ==

5.1 - Pugwash Consultations on Iran. In 2008, the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs convened a series of four high-level meetings on Iran-West relations. They have served as an important unofficial forum for discussion between high-level U.S. nuclear nonproliferation specialists, experts on Iran, and Iranian officials. The last of these meetings was held in December 2008. The discussions emphasized the need for the West to work with Iran on a range of issues, including but not limited to proliferation concerns. We have been heartened to see a positive approach toward negotiations coming from both the US and Iran.

5.2 - Cotta-Ramusino Commentary on Gaza. January 2009. Paolo wrote a commentary on "Consequences of the War on Gaza: prospects for the peace process". Available on the web in both English and Arabic:
http://www.pugwash.org/reports/rc/crisis_in_gaza_commentary-cotta.htm

5.3 - Dhanapala/Cotta-Ramusino Commentary on Gaza: On 8 January, Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala and Paolo issued a joint commentary on the crisis (Available in English and Arabic: http://www.pugwash.org/reports/rc/crisis_in_gaza_commentary.htm) in which they wrote: "As hard as it may look now, there is only one, albeit difficult, way out, namely to stop all violence, to abandon discrimination against any party and get to the negotiating table with the immediate aim of defining a stable truce and bringing the life of the population to a more acceptable standard."

5.4 - Pugwash Council Statement on Gaza. On 9 January the Pugwash Council issued a statement, "Cease-fire in the Gaza Strip," Available in English and Arabic: http://www.pugwash.org/reports/rc/crisis_in_gaza_statement.htm.

5.5 - Council on Foreign Relations, Washington, DC. On 17 February 2009, Paolo gave a talk in Washington, DC at the Council on Foreign Relations, Program on International Institutions and Global Governance. The talk, which was presided over by Charles Ferguson, Philip D. Reed Senior Fellow for Science and Technology. The talk focused on "Improving Relations Between Iran and the West" and involved senior experts and former policy makers.

5.6 - Visit to Region. In mid March Paolo travelled to Tel Aviv and to Ramallah to meet with contacts and to explore future Pugwash work.

5.7 - In the news. On 17 March 2009, an opinion piece Paolo wrote appeared on the Guardian Comment is Free website, "Bringing Iran into the nuclear family"

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/mar/17/foreignpolicy-gordon-brown>

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5.8 - Washington DC. See Item 3.8 for some related May 2009 meetings.

5.9 - Tel Aviv. Paolo participated in a meeting on "The Iranian Revolution:

30 Years After," 24-25 May 2009, Tel Aviv University.

http://www.tau.ac.il/humanities/iranian_studies/events-30_years_after.eng.html

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== 6.0 - CBW ==

6.1 - Geneva Workshop. The 29th Workshop of the Pugwash Study Group on the Implementation of the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions, "Moving Forward After the Seventh BWC Review Conference," took place in Geneva, Switzerland, 29-30 November 2008. Held on the eve of the 2008 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Meeting of States Parties this timely event was attended by 53 participants. The workshop addressed the hostile use of biology and biochemistry not only as an arms control issue, but also as a humanitarian concern.

== 7.0 - SCIENCE AND SOCIETY ==

7.1 - US National Institutes of Health. Executive Director Jeffrey Boutwell delivered a keynote address, "Triangulating Science, Security and Society:

The Pugwash Conferences," at the 6th Annual International Opportunities Expo at the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, 2 April 2009.

PDF available: <http://www.pugwash.org/reports/ees/JB-PP-presentation.pdf>

7.2 - In the news. Former Pugwash President Sir Michael Atiyah was featured in an article on 21 April in The Times (London), "Maths and the Bomb: Sir Michael Atiyah at 80"

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/scotland/article6143896.ece>

7.3 - Edinburgh. Sir Michael Atiyah held a special screening of The Strangest Dream at the Royal Society of Edinburgh in April 2009, in conjunction with other events on the responsibility of scientists. BPG Chair John Finney also participated. Current Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala sent a birthday message, in which he wrote, "The fact that you have chosen to include as part of your birthday celebrations public discussion and dialogue on some of the most important topics facing our society is a testament to your commitment to promoting the involvement of scientists in creating a positive future."

7.4 - In the News. Executive Director Jeffrey Boutwell and Pugwash History Project Director Sandra Butcher were quoted in the 22 May 2009

Physics Today obituary of long-time Pugwashite, Herbert York, who died after a long illness in San Diego. As Jeffrey said, reflecting the sentiments of the Pugwash network, "It is truly no understatement to say that Herb was one of the giants of the American national security and arms control communities...and few people embodied as he did the highest standards of intellectual rigor and passionate engagement for seeking what was best for our country and the world community."
<http://blogs.physicstoday.org/newspicks/2009/05/herb-york-1921-2009.html>

Paolo Cotta-Ramusino wrote on the Pugwash History Blog that talking with Herb "was like talking to the history of arms control itself." See the blog for links to some of Herb's writings, and read Herb's comments on the impact of Pugwash from a 1998 interview. Check the comments for messages from Jeffrey, Paolo and others.
<http://pugwashhistory.blogspot.com/2009/05/herb-york-1921-2009-on-pugwash-history.html#comments>

== 8.0 - HISTORY ==

8.1 - New blog. Director of the Pugwash History Project Sandra Ionno Butcher has launched a new history blog at:
www.pugwashhistory.blogspot.com.

8.2 - Imperial War Museum, London. Sandy gave a talk entitled "Remembering Humanity: Pugwash, Scientists & Peace," at a conference on "Peace History - lessons from the past, hope for the future", sponsored by the International Peace Bureau and the Movement for the Abolition of War, Imperial War Museum, London, 24 April. Prof. Robert Hinde, President of British Pugwash, spoke during the opening plenary session the meeting. The summary of Sandy's talk will be available shortly. Please contact Sandy if you are interested:
sibutcher@earthlink.net

== 9.0 - NATIONAL GROUPS ==

While this is in no way comprehensive, we would like to congratulate national groups on recent activities. We hope the next update will include a wider selection of national group activities: please send updates to Sandra Butcher (sibutcher@earthlink.net). If your group is organizing major events, please also alert the network via Pugwash forum.

9.1. - CANADA. The Canadian national group has been working with the National Film Board on a national tour of The Strangest Dream. Walter Dorn reported that several CPG members who are professors offered to co-organize showing at their universities: University of Toronto, York University, the University of Western Ontario, Carleton University, the University of Ottawa, the Royal Military College of Canada with others likely (University of British Columbia). <http://www.pugwashgroup.ca/>

9.3 - CROATIA. Croatian Pugwash are working with UK Pugwash on a book resulting from their joint NATO Advanced Research Workshop, held in Zagreb 11-16 November 2008. "The Role of Independent Scientists in WMD Threat Assessment," co-edited by John Finney and Ivo Slaus, will contain chapters by many Pugwashites from around the world, the book will be available later this year. The workshop agenda and photos can be found at:
<http://www.pugwash.org/uk/meetings.htm>

9.3 - GERMANY. The German Pugwash group was instrumental in publishing a letter by Helmut Schmidt (SPD), former German President Richard von Weizsäcker (CDU), former Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher (FDP) and SPD politician Egon Bahr, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and International Herald Tribune, 9 January 2009.

9.4 - ITALY. The Italian Pugwash Group hosted the 22nd winter course of the International School on Disarmament and Research on Conflicts, Nuclear Futures: What Would Nuclear Disarmament Look Like? (course directors were Catherine Kelleher and Judith Reppy, school director, Carlo Schaerf). See YouTube for a series of interviews of key speakers:
http://www.youtube.com/view_play_list?p=B1190C8B9B6F4AE9&search_query=ISODARCO
co (if this doesn't work, go to www.youtube.com and type ISODARCO in the search field).

9.5 - JAPAN. Japan Pugwash held a joint workshop with US Pugwash in Tokyo on 24-25 January entitled "Reducing Nuclear Threats: Possible Cooperation between Japan and the United States."

9.6 - SRI LANKA. Sri Lankan Pugwash has a new chair, A P R Aluwihare Professor Emeritus of Surgery of the University of Perdaeniya. The group has organized several events, including 2 regional workshops. They held an event at University of Perdaeniya for Sir Jo's birthday, where a film was shown and Jayantha Dhanapala addressed the participants. Jayantha also addressed the National Academy of Sciences.

9.7 - UK

9.7.1 - In the news. British Pugwash Executive Committee member General Sir Hugh Beach and Field Marshal Lord Bramall and General Lord Ramsbotham published an influential letter in The Times (London) on 16 January 2009, questioning how the UK can play a role in movement toward a nuclear weapons free world while continuing its reliance on nuclear weapons
<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/letters/article5525682.ece>).

9.7.2 - On 30 April, British Pugwash held its annual general meeting, with a well-attended public discussion on "Prospects for Dialogue in the Middle East: Iran and the West, and Israel and Palestine," featuring: Paolo Cotta-Ramusino, Pugwash Secretary General; Andreas Persbo, Senior Researcher, VERTIC; Nomi Bar-Yaacov, Middle East Expert; and Rosemary Hollis, Director, Olive Tree Programme.

9.7.3 - See 9.3.

9.8 - USA. See 9.5.