



## **Pugwash Consultation on the 2010 NPT Review Conference**

**8 May 2010, New York City**

### **Rapporteur's Report Sandra Ionno Butcher**

Pugwash convened a private consultation involving 20 current and former diplomats, UN officials and leading NGO experts from 15 countries for a general exchange of views on issues related to the current Review Conference. The meeting was chaired by Pugwash President Jayantha Dhanapala and Pugwash Secretary General Paolo Cotta-Ramusino. Each participant took part in his or her personal capacity, under Pugwash/Chatham House rules. The purpose of the meeting was to contribute a creative atmosphere in which items related to the NPT Review Conference could be discussed in a more holistic way among key participants, drawing upon the extensive experience of former practitioners.

This report highlights areas which might serve as a catalyst for a successful conclusion of the Review Conference. As with all Pugwash meetings, there was no attempt to achieve consensus and this report is the rapporteur's summary of some of the main topics raised. No viewpoint expressed in this report should be attributed to any specific participant. Rather we encourage further discussion among delegates, officials, and the NGO community on some of the topics raised during the course of the consultation.

#### **General**

The more relaxed atmosphere at this Review Conference as compared to the 2005 Review Conference was welcomed. There was a recognition on all sides of the window of opportunity provided by President Obama's repeated commitment to create conditions for a nuclear weapons free world. The urgency of seeking ways to operationalize that commitment equally was underscored.

Areas of discussion focused on five categories: transparency, verification, doctrines, disarmament and procedural issues.

#### **Transparency**

Transparency is primarily a declaratory confidence building exercise. It can contribute to an environment more conducive to more predictable cooperative security. The dramatic US announcement of the numbers of its nuclear arsenal has set the stage at this Review Conference for further discussion of transparency.

- ▶ Transparency may provide a useful theme to explore in the Review Conference and could be important to discuss in the final document.
- ▶ Transparency issues must be addressed not only in terms of disarmament, but also in the areas of non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- ▶ It might be useful to probe the question and further elucidate *why* it is important to seek transparency. There also is a need to better define transparency and to set consistent benchmarks, possibly in the context of a future Pugwash meeting.
- ▶ The P5 should be encouraged to promote transparency in their statements and positions.

### **Verification**

Verification is legally binding. It plays a role in providing greater confidence in the serious intent of transparency declarations.

- ▶ Verification issues are relevant to all three pillars of the NPT, and there was a recognition on all sides of the need to have agreed shared understandings of verification systems and norms.
- ▶ There was hope that there will be a sharing with the rest of the Conference of information provided by the UK-Norway experience, as this might encourage future initiatives by other countries.
- ▶ It was proposed to extend the role of the IAEA to include verifying disarmament.
- ▶ It might prove a positive step to establish a Track 2 or Track 1½ process for verification and inspection of the New START treaty. This could involve influential non-governmental public figures, an idea Pugwash has raised with former European defense and foreign affairs ministers, based on the model of parallel public inspections conducted in the years of the implementation of the INF Treaty (the Intermediate and Shorter Range nuclear Forces Treaty).

### **Doctrines**

Nuclear doctrines are important to consider, since the issue of possession of nuclear weapons arises from nuclear deterrence doctrines.

- ▶ The way in which discussion of doctrine is handled in the Review Conference final document will be very important. Coming at a time when NATO's Strategic Concept review is underway, it may send an important message that might help inform the NATO deliberations.
- ▶ Despite differing opinions on the US Nuclear Posture Review, the NPR can serve as a point of departure for discussions on this issue at the Review Conference. Some concern was expressed that the NPR did not explicitly state that the 'sole' purpose of nuclear weapons is to deter other nuclear weapons. It was noted, however, that for the first time the US has set this as a *goal*.
- ▶ There was some discussion of the continued role of extended deterrence, and recognition of the pressures this can create for non-nuclear weapons states which are not part of a nuclear alliance or protected by the 'nuclear umbrella.' Some felt this damaged the principle of equal security for all.

- ▶ The continuing impact of the US-India nuclear deal was explored. There was some concern expressed that the Nuclear Suppliers Group and others did not express criticism in a strong and timely manner. Assurance that there won't be more deals like this in the future will be important. There was hope that there might be discussion in Main Committees 2 and perhaps 3 on this issue. Without singling out the US-India deal, there was a hope that there will be a block on future deals. Without such action, non-nuclear weapons states concerns may intensify in the future.

## **Disarmament**

The importance of the need for further disarmament progress was underscored by many and there was an expectation that disarmament will be discussed in detail, as at every Review Conference.

- ▶ It was suggested that Main Committee 1 might put the various offers/displays of recent related measures that have been taken on disarmament into a form that is readily accessible. For example, it might include summary of efforts taken to close production facilities, unilateral and bilateral reductions, and highlighting areas that states already intend to do in future.
- ▶ There was some discussion about the P5 statement to 'carry on' the commitments of 1995 and 2000, which some interpret as being a weaker statement than a firm recommitment. Others pointed out the *intent* of the phrase was to show a very active commitment.
- ▶ There was dialogue on the pros and cons of the question of setting deadlines for both short and long-term disarmament goals. Setting such a timeline might indeed prove an historic breakthrough for this Review Conference. However it was also noted that setting timelines, as in the case of the Chemical Weapons Convention, might be problematic if those benchmarks are not met, even if the party is acting in good faith. It was noted that even with the CWC, however, this process has been beneficial in drawing focus to the issue due to the missed deadline.
- ▶ The importance of not allowing deadlines to become an impediment to consensus was noted.
- ▶ If there is not the ability for a general consensus on a timeline, perhaps the P5 might issue a collective statement about a timeline for disarmament.
- ▶ At the very least there needs to be a collective appeal for progress by 2015, though there is a need to better define what this might mean.
- ▶ There was discussion on setting a possible timeline for work on or conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention.
- ▶ It was noted that the question of further reductions of tactical or non-strategic nuclear weapons is an area in which progress might have a profound impact on other issues.
- ▶ In this context, establishing a principle that nuclear weapons should not be based on foreign soil would be important progress. Removal of US nuclear weapons from Europe to US territory, following the post-Soviet example, is seen as a potentially very powerful step in terms of both disarmament and doctrinal issues.
- ▶ There was recognition of the US decision to submit protocols of two Nuclear Weapons Free Zones to the US Senate. Other nuclear weapons states could be encouraged to take similar action. Such a step, worthy in and of itself, may in turn help reinforce prospects for the US process.

- ▶ There will be a separate Pugwash consultation on the Middle East on May 15, but the importance of defining some criteria for success on the Middle East resolution was noted. Setting an agenda for progress, hopefully including some timelines, will be needed to overcome the negative impact of the lack of progress in this area.
- ▶ The possibility of extending the INF treaty to other parts of the world was noted.
- ▶ The need for progress on the package of initiatives at the Conference on Disarmament was highlighted. These include the Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty, the nuclear weapons convention, negative security assurances and preventing an arms race in outer space.

### **Procedural/structural issues**

The positive role and personal involvement of the UN Secretary General was widely appreciated. The President of the Conference also has taken welcome steps to try to ensure coordination amongst the committees, and that Main Committees are coordinating their work plans.

- ▶ Strengthening the institutional mechanism for linkage between the three pillars might prove a useful exercise, for example in possibly identifying a more holistic action plan for the next five years that might be adopted as a consensus document. Even if this were only one agreed paragraph it might prove very useful.
- ▶ The example of the mechanism used in 1985 might prove useful, in which the chair called meetings two times per week, to coordinate information exchange, and to provide the chapeau for the final document, and importantly to identify early-on possible choke points.
- ▶ Support was expressed for the innovative idea for a common template for Main Committee and subcommittee reports, each reviewing the past and highlighting future oriented action plans.
- ▶ There was an idea however that perhaps in the 4<sup>th</sup> week the President of the Conference might have a special session in which delegates could be given the opportunity to address this issue.
- ▶ The importance of ongoing discussions on disarmament was emphasized, via the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee, and other fora.
- ▶ The idea for a President's Group, to carry forward progress from the Review Conference in the 5 year interval, was discussed.

In general our discussions were guided by a sense of common purpose in the urgency of seizing the opportunities made possible by many recent developments. A failure for the Review Conference to live up to this potential could have profound, widespread, and damaging impact. There was goodwill expressed in our discussions for exploring in creative settings options for progress and for injecting such perspectives into the Review Conference processes. Pugwash acknowledged with deep thanks the participation of such a knowledgeable and committed group of people during this busy time.