

**Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs
and the British Pugwash Group**

ROTBLAT CENTENARY CELEBRATION

The Royal Society, Wednesday 10 December 2008

**Progressing the nuclear disarmament agenda
Policy, diplomacy and science**

Professor Paolo Cotta-Ramusino

Secretary-General, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs

Presentation 1: Implications of present regional conflicts for nuclear disarmament

Professor Cotta-Ramusino began by noting that the presence of nuclear weapons make the possibility of general war impossible for the future of mankind. He highlighted risks associated with nuclear weapons including:

- The potential for conflict between India and Pakistan
- The potential for conflict in the Middle East, where Israel currently possesses nuclear weapons.
- The risk of nuclear terrorism
- The risk of nuclear weapons use, between the US and Russia where thousands of nuclear weapons are still on constant alert.

He noted the interplay between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Without nuclear disarmament there is a lack of trust by Non-Nuclear Weapon States and no chance that nuclear proliferation can be halted for ever.

He noted the trend by countries like Iran and North Korea to use nuclear programmes to increase political pressure and the sense of injustice that arises from categorisation of countries as good proliferators (eg Israel, India) and bad proliferators.

The 'war on terror' had created a mentality that makes disarmament impossible. The concept of 'civilised' countries against 'uncivilised' ones works against disarmament. The use of 'non-dialogue' and 'non-communication' is going in exactly the wrong direction.

In response to questions, Professor Cotta-Ramusino pointed out that current proposals from Russia need a good interlocutor. Baroness Williams drew attention of the meeting to a statement made the previous day by the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister at a meeting she had attended at the European Parliament, which had been constructive in contrast by some recent Russian statements.

[With thanks to Nicola Butler who produced these informal notes.]