

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

ROTBLAT CENTENARY CELEBRATION

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

Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala

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Former UN Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs
President of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference*

Presentation 2: Working towards a strengthened NPT in 2010 and beyond.

Ambassador Dhanapala began by noting that the NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, but that it is discriminatory – a system of nuclear apartheid. Nonetheless it is the only treaty where the nuclear weapon states are held accountable for the achievement of nuclear disarmament and treaty is a bulwark against proliferation. For example the Kennedy administration expected around 25 – 30 states to become nuclear capable but now there are only 8-9 (depending on whether you count North Korea).

But the Treaty has been weakened in recent years. The bargain between the nuclear haves and have nots has not been honoured, nor the bargain reached at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

Dhanapala pointed out that although there had been considerable reductions in nuclear arsenals the full extent of Article VI is still not observed, despite the 1996 ICJ opinion. Despite the unequivocal commitment to eliminate nuclear arsenals and the commitment to 13 steps towards disarmament made at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, there had been absolutely no progress. The 2005 Review Conference had failed to agree a final document and no further progress had been made at the UN's sixtieth anniversary summit. The CTBT remained to enter into force, the ABM Treaty had been abandoned and progress on START 2/3 had been abandoned in favour of the SORT Treaty, which has no provision for verification. This only leaves START 1, which is due to expire next year. Progress on these issues should be a first priority for the Obama Administration.

Dhanapala cautioned that as long as some states have nuclear weapons, others will seek to acquire them as a symbol of power. The threat of regime change drives some states to seek means to deter attack from other countries.

Nuclear weapons and nuclear power are like two sides of the same coin. Proposals on the nuclear fuel cycle must be equitable.

He noted that the states outside the NPT have all been assisted by existing nuclear weapon states. For example, China's support for Pakistan's nuclear reactors. He warned that Israel expects to be 'in the queue' for nuclear assistance in exchange for signature of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.

This is cause for concern as frustration is increasing and the tensile strength of the NPT will be put to the test. Past review conferences have attempted to bridge the cracks, but the cracks are getting bigger, leading to fear that the treaty could unravel. This is something that the Obama administration will have to address.

Dhanapala welcomed the calls by Kissinger, Shultz, Perry and Nunn for disarmament and the recent Global Zero conference in Paris, but noted that in the roadmap of this proposal, nuclear weapons would not come down to zero until 2025, as it emphasised negotiations on nuclear weapons numbers, not signature of a treaty or delegitimization of the weapons themselves. Some of these proposals are still setting the elimination of nuclear weapons as a distant goal. In comparison chemical weapons arsenals have not yet been reduced to zero, but the CWC has outlawed the weapons and established an organisation and verification process.

Dhanapala called for a clear cut statement from Obama regarding the (non) use of nuclear weapons. He noted that on 24 October, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon set out steps for achieving nuclear disarmament, including the draft nuclear weapons convention that Costa Rica and Malaysia have put in front of the UN General Assembly.

Dhanapala noted that the UK's replacement of Trident was a negative step. A UK decision not to replace Trident would have put pressure on France. Progress is needed on withdrawal of US tactical nuclear weapons in Europe and rebuilding relations with Russia.

A more positive approach involving diplomacy and inducements needs to be made to North Korea and Iran, as the UK has done previously and effectively with Libya.

Further practical steps are needed to strengthen the NPT including reviewing the withdrawal clause, addressing the nuclear fuel cycle and achieving greater implementation of the additional protocol. Action also needs to be taken on Article VI and Article IV.

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