

HIROSHIMA DAY 2006

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Dear friends of peace!

A 12 year old boy had just arrived to his school in the morning of 6th of August 1945, when he heard a plane coming in over Hiroshima. He was curious but not afraid because one single plane was not dangerous. He went to the window to see. That saved his life. He saw an enormous white light and when he woke up the whole school had disappeared. A burning hell where the people he met kept their arms in front of themselves in order not to touch their bodies. He walked to the river to cool off. His mother found him after several days. He went blind for a while but no other illness hit him. All his life he had been afraid of getting the atomic sickness and he had never told anyone that he was a hibakusha until he recognised that he himself had a responsibility to tell his story and do his best to stop nuclear weapons. I met him in my first visit to Hiroshima.

If you once in your life have been to Hiroshima museum and seen the stone which has a shadow of a human being burnt into it - we don't know if it was a women or a man, nothing was left more than the shadow - you will never be the same. If you once in your life have met hibakushas and listened to their stories you will never be the same. Their stories of burning hell, of illness, of handicaps, of denying from the society, you will never be the same. You know that you have an obligation to stop nuclear weapons and to rid them out of the map of the world.

But why were these weapons developed?

More than 100 years ago Dr Marie Curie discovered the radioactive elements radium and polonium. A big break-through in the medical

area. Within two decades it was possible to use the new discover for heart diagnosis and other fatal diseases. In the beginning the radioactivity saved lives. 47 years later the same knowledge was used to produce and use the first nuclear weapons destroying Hiroshima and Nagasaki and killing then and in the years to come more than 200.000 people, by that presenting a total new way of warfare. The nuclear arms race that followed was unbelievable, the capacity could kill the human beings not only once but several times over. Marie Curies discover turned out to be the biggest threat against world peace and security.

During the Second World War the world feared that Hitler should develop atomic weapons. Nuclear scientist among them Joseph Rotblat from Poland who lost his wife in a concentration camp, gave their knowledge to the Manhattan Project in order not to let the Nazis conquer the world. When they recognised that Hitler could not produce nuclear weapons Joseph Rotblat proposed immediately that the project should stop, because there was no use any longer of such a horrible weapon. Politicians and military said no to his proposal. When you could develop such an effective weapon, you could not stop it, even if the motive for it had disappeared. Rotblat lost his promised American citizenship and decided to devote his life to get rid of nuclear weapons. He became in fact the first nuclear weapon opponent.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS OF TODAY

Today's storage of nuclear weapons has 700 times the bursting power of what was used during this centuries big wars, which killed 44 million people. There are today thousands of nuclear weapons on missiles, submarines, ships and on aircraft **on alert** all around the world. Ready to be used within a minute. There exist today nuclear weapons so small that they can fit in a suitcase, beyond any treaty control.

Long after the end of the Cold war around 30.000 nuclear weapons remain and since 1945 more than 8 trillion dollars have been spent on nuclear weapons.

In the shadow of the cold war the nuclear arms race increased. The destruction capacity of nuclear weapons is enormous. Any use would

lead to catastrophe. The risk that nuclear weapons will be used by mistake or through miscalculations has increased. Political instability, unsafe control and lack of management with nuclear weapons can lead to disaster.

On January 25th 1995 the world came close to accidental nuclear weapon use when the Russian military detected an unidentified ballistic missile over Norway possibly heading for Russia. Orders were given to Russian ballistic missile submarines to go to battle stations. Disaster was averted by only a few minutes when the missile was reassessed as harmless. Its identity and research mission had not reached the Russian early warning system. If such an incident would occur when relations between the US and Russia might not be good, disaster might not be averted.

The New England Journal of Medicine published in April 1998 a special report which concludes that despite the end of the Cold war the risk of an accidental nuclear attack has increased. It pointed to the alarming number of US military personnel who had to be removed from involvement with nuclear weapons because of alcohol, drug abuse or psychiatric problems. The former 4 star general and Commander in Chief of the US Strategic Air Command Lee Butler with responsibility for all US Air Force and Navy nuclear deterrent forces and who literally had had his finger on the button of releasing nuclear weapons, told the same stories in the work in the Canberra Commission. He was absolutely convinced that the world needed to be free of all nuclear weapons.

WHAT TO DO?

What has happened and what can be done to get rid of nuclear weapons? First of all everyone has responsibility and possibility to work to that end. I will give you two examples how one can work in order to move forward: The story of Joseph Rotblat, Pugwash and the Canberra Commission and the story of getting nuclear weapons declared illegal.

Joseph Rotblat was one of the founders of Pugwash Movement, where scientist from east and west met in order to build a bridge between the two opponents after the Second World War. Joseph was convinced after several years of work that in order to reach a world

free of nuclear weapons a plan has to be developed containing measures to reach this goal. All nuclear weapons must be forbidden and step by step destroyed as other weapons of mass destruction, as chemical weapons and biological weapons.

And it is possible to abolish all nuclear weapons; technically, politically and economically - if the will exists. This was later confirmed in the Canberra Commission report, which was presented in 1996. The prime minister of Australia Paul Keating was made aware of a book written by a group of scientists and others in the Pugwash movement - I was one of them - on the initiative of Joseph Rotblat.

The book had the title "A nuclear-weapon-free-world - desirable, feasible?"

Not every one of them - nuclear scientist most of them - believed in Joseph Rotblat's goal that a nuclear-weapon-free world was feasible. Some of them were looking at Joseph as a dreamer. It was not possible to reach a nuclear-weapon-free world. The discussions went very hot and deep and Joseph argued well for his case patient, dogged but kindly. And to the surprise of some of them we managed to agree and the book was printed. The book became the starting point.

CANBERRA COMMISSION

In December 1995 the prime minister of Australia Paul Keating asked a group of experts to present a **realistic** plan on how **all** nuclear weapons can be abolished. Not a dream but a realistic plan. We were sixteen men and one woman on the Commission. We had the best scientists providing us with excellent basic material and many NGO's sent us their opinions. We had a full-time working and writing secretariat to our disposal. And we got nine months to deliver our "baby" ; the Report.

The members had different backgrounds and experiences: two 4-star generals, general Lee Butler and Michael Carver, former US secretary of defence Robert McNamara, former prime minister of France Michel Rochard, several ambassadors and scientist and of course the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize Winner Joseph Rotblat.

We based the case for the elimination of nuclear weapons on three major arguments:

The first one was that the destructiveness of nuclear weapons is so great that they have no military utility against a comparably equipped opponent, other than the belief that they deter that opponent from using nuclear weapons. Use of those weapons against a non-nuclear opponent is politically and morally indefensible.

The second argument was that the indefinite deployment of the weapons carries a high risk of their ultimate use through accident or inadvertence.

And the last argument was that the possession of the weapons by some states stimulates other nations to require them, reducing security of all.

IMMEDIATE STEPS

We demanded that nuclear weapons states at the highest political level should - once and unanimously - declare that they want to abandon all nuclear weapons, even if this is already stated in the article 6 of the NPT, which they all have signed. Such a commitment would change instantly the tenor of the debate, the thrust of war planning and the timing or indeed the necessity for modernisation programs.

This commitment must be accompanied by a series of practical, realistic and mutually reinforcing steps. As a start, without any negotiations, they can do several things which will immediately decrease the threat of nuclear weapons under which we all live. The first steps we proposed were:

- * Taking nuclear weapons off alert
- * Removal of warheads from delivery vehicles
- * Ending deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons
- * Further reduction of United States and Russian nuclear arsenals

* Agreement among the nuclear weapon states of reciprocal no-first-use undertakings, and of a non-use undertaking by them in relation to the non-nuclear-weapon states.

To take nuclear weapons off alert will dramatically reduce the chance of an accidental or unauthorised nuclear weapons launch. All nuclear weapons must be taken off alert. This could in the first instance be adopted by the nuclear weapon states unilaterally.

Separation of nuclear warheads from their delivery vehicles is a must and they should be placed far from each other and not easily be put together again. The physical separation of warheads from vehicles would strongly reinforce the gains achieved by taking nuclear forces off alert.

The nuclear weapon states should unilaterally remove all non-strategic nuclear weapons from deployed sites to a limited number of secure storage facilities on their own territory.

A full stop for testing must be decided.

The nuclear weapon states should agree and state that they would not be the first to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against each other and that they would not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons in any conflict with a non-nuclear weapon state as soon as possible. This would lead to an important and total change in the nuclear weapon strategy of the nuclear weapon states.

All this can be done without delaying negotiations.

REINFORCING STEPS

Many other proposals are to be found in the report i.e.,

- * action to prevent further horizontal proliferation
- * developing verification arrangements for a nuclear weapon free world with an international ban on research, storing, selling and use of nuclear weapons
- * cessation of the production of fissile material for nuclear explosive purpose

Effective verification is critical to the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear weapon free world. Concurrent with the central disarmament process, there will be a need for activity to build an environment, conducive to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The spread of nuclear weapon free zones around the globe can progressively codify the transition to a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Canberra Commission Report was not a wishful dream but a realistic way of eliminating all nuclear weapons. Joseph Rotblat had really come close to his faith. The issue had left the academic world and turned into the political level.

Even if the Canberra Commission Report not directly gave result the NPT conference 2000 included in their thirteen steps the proposals from Canberra Commission. NPT 2000 is signed by all member States including the nuclear weapon states and is still valid. As well as in the recently given report "Weapons of Terror" with the subtitle "Freeing the world of Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Arms"(Blix report) Joseph Rotblat's ideas and proposals of ways towards a world free of nuclear weapons are deeply reflected.

ILLEGALITY

So to the other example. The illegality of nuclear weapons.

In the end of our work in the Canberra Commission the International Court of Justice in the Haag (July 1996) gave their response to a request from the General Assembly for an advisory opinion on the legality of the threat of or use of nuclear weapons. I will soon tell you the answer but first the background.

For long the International Lawyers against nuclear weapons had tried to get the question of illegality of nuclear weapons on the agenda. My own civil servants in the foreign ministry told me that it should be impossible to receive an answer making nuclear weapons illegal. The lawyers decided to try to bring it to the General Assembly of UN and formulated a resolution as a request of an advisory opinion from the International Court. It was taken on board by some states. Almost a full war broke out in UN. I was there and could with my own eyes see how the superpower US went into the

room of the non-aligned-states and put pressure on many small countries relaying on economic or other support from USA. Such a resolution was unacceptable for USA.

The first year it was not put forward but the next year the resolution was brought to the General Assembly even if USA in the meantime had used all its power to threaten many small countries. And to the surprise of many, the resolution was adopted by the General Assembly with a clear majority. Now began the next step for us who wanted to see a positive answer. We had to influence the International Court and our own government.

When the International Court received the request they turned to their member states and asked them on their opinion before the Court could give an answer. As my government had lost in the election I had to do the work in the parliament. I put forward a resolution signed by all political parties except the conservative party, demanding the government to respond to the Court that Sweden's position was that use of or threat to use nuclear weapons was illegal. Of course the parliament adopted the resolution and in the very last minutes with help of some political pressure we managed to get the government to respond that "the parliament - not the government- had the opinion that use of nuclear weapons were illegal".

This work and many others work towards their governments gave result. The court declared in July 1996 that use of or threat of using nuclear weapons was not in accordance with international law. A very important victory for the public opinion!

There are many more examples of pressure from ordinary people which have changed the nuclear policy, i.e. stop for deploying of medium-range-nuclear weapons in different European countries, stop for development of the neutron bombs; a bomb which should prevail all houses and properties but effectively kill all human livings, stop for nuclear testing by France through a boycott of all French wines just to mention some.

Today we remember all those children, women and men who lost their lives in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and years after, due to the most horrible weapons constructed by human beings. Today there is a solemn ceremony in the park in the city of Hiroshima and thousands of citizens will place their small paper-boat with a burning light in the river to remember and honour all them who died by nuclear weapons.

The best way for us to honour them will be to take our own responsibility - everyone can do something - to act with persistent and conviction. With facts and determination you can change the world. And I am convinced that one day Joseph Rotblat's dream and our dream - a nuclear-weapon-free world - will come true.

Thank you.

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